NVMEN

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

CONTENTS

NVMEN

EARLY SYRIAN ASCETICISM [1])

BY

S. P. BROCK

Cambridge, England

I begin with two quotations:

> "Incomprehensible! he is the son of respectable upper middle class parents, with a good education, and excellent prospects for a steady comfortable life, yet he has left home and gone off to join a lot of dirty vagrants."

> "Sell all your belongings. Anyone of you who does not abandon all his possessions cannot be my disciple. If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife and children, even his own self, he cannot be a disciple of mine; and he who does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be a disciple of mine. You do not belong to the world."

The first, slightly adapted, quotation are the words, not, as one might think, of dismayed parents of a twentieth-century teenager who has deserted his parental home and way of life, and exchanged it for that of a hippy commune; rather, they represent the sort of thing that parents in Antioch in the 380 s were saying when their sons left home and ran off to the desert to join the monks there [2]). It was in answer to complaints such as these that John Chrysostom, then still a deacon, wrote, sometime between 383 and 386, his treatise "Against the detractors of the monastic life".

The second quotation, or set of quotations, are of course from the New Testament [3]), and they represent the chief sayings of Jesus on the subject of discipleship—sayings which served as the starting point, and justification, for the way of life of the early ascetics.

In all ages, those who enjoy comfortable and secure positions in life have found it difficult, if not impossible, to understand why someone, in whose power it was to benefit from the same type of life, should instead choose to throw it all up, in exchange for an alternative that

---

1) Paper read at a colloquium on 'Asceticism in the Early Byzantine World', held at the University of Birmingham, England, 19th-20th March, 1971.
2) *P.G.* xlvii, col. 321 (middle).
3) Luke xii 33; xiv 33, 26; John xv 19. I quote from the Old Syriac version.

appears to them at best incomprehensible, at worst, downright perverse.
Now there are of course very obvious differences, most notably in
motivation, between the fourth and fifth century "drop-outs" from
society and their modern counterparts, but since the "ascetic movement"
in Syria—in particular in its more extreme manifestations—is one that
is especially hard for twentieth century man to comprehend, even an
imperfect parallel, such as the one I have drawn, can be helpful in the
effort to understand what is to us such an alien phenomenon.

Movements can often best be understood in terms of reactions against
some aspect of contemporary society, and, just as the idealism of
modern aspirants to an "alternate society" has largely been motivated
by disgust at the materialistic affluence of the post-war society they
live in, so that of their fourth century counterparts was, to some
extent at least, the product of a reaction against the degradation of the
quality of Christian life after the last persecutions had ceased. As we
shall see, the ascetic is in many ways the successor of the martyr. To
the early church the martyr represented an ideal, and after the end of
the persecutions, when this ideal was no longer attainable, it was
replaced by that of the ascetic, whose whole life was in fact often
regarded in terms of a martyrdom [4]), and it is very significant that
much of the terminology used in connection with ascetics, such as
"contest", "athlete" and so on, was previously applied to martyrs. In
the case of the ascetic the human persecutor has simply been replaced
by a spiritual, that is to say, demonic, counterpart. Moreover, if one
sees the ascetics of the fourth century onwards as heirs to the martyrs,
it helps one to realise why they regarded their way of life as simply
carrying on the norm of Christian life in pre-Constantinian times [5]),
when to be a Christian was usually a matter of real seriousness.

It is important to understand this sense of continuum back to the

---

4) Cf. T. J. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraemi Syri Hymni et Sermones*, IV, cols. 215/6:
"Teach your body the martyrdom that consists in mortification"; compare also A.
Vööbus, *Literary Critical and Historical Studies in Ephrem the Syrian* (Stock-
holm, 1958), pp. 105-6. At the same time asceticism was regarded by several
early writers as a training for martyrdom; thus, notably, Origen, *Exhortation
to Martyrdom* (*G. C. S.*, Origenes I), xi, xxi, etc. (on which see S. T. Bettencourt,
Doctrina Ascetica Origenis, (*Studia Anselmiana* xvi, 1945), pp. 120 ff); Atha-
nasius, *Life of Antony*, § 47. For this theme in general, see E. E. Malone, "The
Monk and the Martyr", *Studia Anselmiana* xxxviii (1956), pp. 201-28; H. Musu-
rillo, in *Traditio* xii (1956), pp. 55-62.

5) Cf. L. Bouyer, *La vie de saint Antoine* (Paris, 1950), pp. 9-10.

earliest church that the ascetics of the fourth century had, for only
when this is in mind can one appreciate properly the indigenous
character of Syrian ascetism. Now if one looks at some of the sources
which purport to deal with the fourth century Syrian ascetics, one is
in fact given the impression that Egypt was the ultimate source of
inspiration for the ideal of the ascetic—very often, of course,
synonymous with monastic—life. Thus, for example, according to a
large number of Syriac sources monasticism was introduced into Syria
and Mesopotamia by disciples of Pachomius, notably a certain Mar
Awgen. A closer scrutiny, however, throws up the remarkable fact
that Mar Awgen is never mentioned in any source, Syriac or Greek,
that can be dated earlier than about the ninth century [6]). It thus be-
comes apparent that later Syrian monks were prepared to forget their
genuinely native heritage under the influence of the immense prestige
that Egyptian monasticism gained, through works like Palladius'
Paradise (well known in Syriac).

In point of fact, the fourth and fifth century ascetics of Syria, who
are so well described by Theodoret in his *Historia Religiosa*, were heirs
to a remarkable native ascetic tradition that went back to the very begin-
nings of Christianity. Let us take a look at some of the manifestations
of this ascetic tradition. My first example is taken from the Gospel
that has traditionally been associated with Antioch, that attributed to
Luke. From a very early date the Beatitudes were regarded as providing
a paradigm of Christian conduct, and if one compares the two forms
in which the first beatitude has been handed down in Matthew and
Luke [7]), one at once notices a very significant difference of emphasis:
Matthew has "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom
of heaven", while in Luke the poverty is made external: "Blessed are
the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven". A similar shift in
emphasis can be seen in the second of Luke's series: here the cor-
responding words in Matthew read: "Blessed are those who hunger and
thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled". In Luke, however,

---

6) Cf. S. Jargy, "Les origines du monachisme en Syrie et en Mésopotamie",
Proche Orient Chrétien ii (1952), pp. 110-25; A. Vööbus, "The Origins of
Monasticism in Mesopotamia", *Church History* xx (1951), pp. 27-37, and in his
History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, I (*C.S.C.O.*, Subsidia 14; 1958),
pp. 145-6, 217 ff.; J. M. Fiey, in *Analecta Bollandiana* lxxx (1962), pp. 52-81.
    7) Matthew v 3; Luke vi 20.

the hunger is no longer metaphorical: "Blessed are those who hunger now, for you shall be filled". Before leaving the Beatitudes it might be added that it is an interesting observation that several of the names given to ascetics by early Syriac writers are drawn from this source [8]).

Already in the Gospels we can in fact see two different reactions to the realization that riches *can* be a hindrance to discipleship. What one might term the 'liberal' answer to this problem is to consider a simple warning sufficient, while the 'ascetic' one—which is found very obviously implied in Luke's parable of the Rich man and Lazarus—is to demand actual renunciation of the riches, so as to avoid any danger that they *might* prove a hindrance [9]).

The Gospel sayings stress four different aspects of discipleship: a follower of Christ should have no material possessions, or fixed abode; he should break with his family, and he must bear his daily cross. Two important areas where one might expect some ascetic teaching to be involved are, however, neglected: I mean in matters of food and marital life. On neither of these points is any clear guidance to be found in the Gospels, although from Paul's correspondence one can see that these were urgent problems in the nascent Christian communities. On the matter of food, Paul advocated a freedom that was to be modified only out of consideration for the views of the spiritually weaker members of the community. It is clear nevertheless, that others thought very differently on this subject, and, since religious regulations about foods were common in both the Graeco-Roman and the Jewish traditions, those familiar with them wanted to read them into, or even impose them on, the Gospels. Thus Marcion, whose followers, incidentally, were very numerous in Syria and Mesopotamia [10]), could not believe that in the Lord's Prayer Jesus had taught men to be so materialistic as to pray for their daily food, and so he altered the pronoun 'our' to 'thy': "Give us this day *thy* daily bread". A related case concerns the diet of John the Baptist. It has long been recognised

---

8) On the popularity of the Beatitudes in encratite Judaeo-Christian circles see G. Quispel, in *Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme* (Paris, 1965), p. 41.

9) Compare in general H. von Campenhausen, *Tradition and Life in the Early Church* (London, 1968), pp. 90-122.

10) Cf. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism...*, I, p. 45 ff.; G. G. Blum, *Rabbula von Edessa* (*C.S.C.O.*, Subsidia 34; 1969), pp. 99-100; J. M. Fiey, "Les Marcionites dans les textes historiques de l'église de Perse", *Le Muséon* lxxxiii (1970), pp. 183-8.

that Tatian's harmony of the Four Gospels, the Diatessaron, contained
a number of modifications which he made so as to square the Gospel
record with his own encratite views. Now one passage that greatly
troubled the ascetically minded was that found in the Synoptic Gospels
on the subject of John's food in the desert. John's life was, needless to
say, regarded by the early church as the ideal which the ascetic should
imitate, but the statement that he partook of meat—even in the form
of locusts—evidently caused considerable scandal in certain circles, and
we know of numerous attempts that were made to exonerate him of
this apparent lapse. The majority of these explanations (which enjoyed
a considerable vogue among Syriac writers eager to enhance his ascetic
prowess [11]) made John into a vegetarian, explaining the *akrides* of the
Greek either as a plant name, or as a corruption of *akrodrua*, 'wild
fruits'. Tatian, however, who was one of the first to tackle this problem,
adopted a different solution, and it is fairly certain that in the Diates-
saron John's diet was described as consisting of '*milk* and honey' [12]):
in other words, John, in his ascetic life, actually anticipated the diet
commonly regarded as that of heaven—in the Christian context one
need only recall that the newly baptised, who had thus become children
of heaven, were given milk and honey, as symbols of the new heavenly
life that they had just entered [13]). John's anticipation of the kingdom
of heaven, as implied in the Diatessaron, is particularly interesting in
the light of the Syriac understanding of Luke xx 35-6, a passage to
which reference will very shortly be made.

The other subject on which the Gospels gave no explicit teaching was
that of marriage. I say 'explicit' advisedly, for the early Syriac-speaking
church thought otherwise. One passage in particular evidently caught
their attention, and once again it is interesting to see the ascetic slant
that Luke, alone of the Synoptics, provides [14]). The passage in question
is Luke xx 35-6, with parallels in Matthew xx 30 and Mark xii 25.

---

11) See "The Baptist's diet in Syriac sources", *Oriens Christianus* liv (1970),
pp. 113-24.

12) For details see "The Baptist's diet...', pp. 115-6. Other examples of
encratite alterations made by Tatian in the Gospel text of the Diatessaron are
given by Vööbus, *History of Asceticism...*, I, p. 40 f.

13) It might be noted that, according to Hippolytus (*Elenchus*, V. 8.30), the
Naasenes made milk and honey the symbol of the food of the perfect.

14) The importance of this passage has rightly been stressed by P. Nagel,
*Die Motivierung der Askese in der alten Kirche und der Ursprung des Mönch-
tums, T.U.* xcv (1966), pp. 34 ff.

Jesus is answering the Saduccees' query about resurrection, and in the course of Jesus' reply in Matthew and Mark we find the words: "At the resurrection men and women do not marry; they are like angels in heaven". In Luke, on the other hand, there is a significant difference: "Those who have been judged worthy of a place in the other world, and of the resurrection from the dead, do not marry, for they are not subject to death any longer. They are like angels; they are sons of God, because they share in the resurrection". In other words, the worthy *already* anticipate the marriageless life of angels *in this world* [15]). The implications are even clearer in the Old Syriac translation of the passage: "Those who have become worthy to receive that world (i.e. the kingdom) and that resurrection from the dead, do not marry, nor can they die, for they have been made equal with the angels, (and being) the sons of the resurrection (they are) like the sons of God" [16]).

Given a passage like this, it is easy to see why such stress was laid, in the early Syriac-speaking church, on the fact that the ladies in the very popular parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids were *parthenoi*, virgins. And it is interesting that both the Greek term, *parthenos*, and the Syriac equivalent, *bethula*, is very often found applied to men.

It is indeed well known that rigorist attitudes towards marriage were very common in many early Christian communities [17]), but it is clear that one area where they were especially rife was that of Syria-Mesopotamia. In the second century marriage and procreation receive outright condemnation by Tatian [18]), and similar attitudes can be seen in a

---

15) There is an interesting parallel here with the beliefs of the members of the Qumran community: by entry into the community a man becomes a partner with the angels in the service of God. This idea is clearly expressed in I Q S a II, 8: "The holy angels are present in their congregation", and in I Q Hodayot III, 19-23 (on this passage see especially M. Delcor, *Les Hymnes de Qumran* (Paris, 1962), pp. 126-7).

16) My translation differs on some points from that of F. C. Burkitt in *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*. On the 'angelic life' of ascetics, see in general S. Frank, *Angelikos Bios* (Münster, 1964). From Syriac sources many examples can be found; here I cite only two: in the anonymous panegyric on Rabbula (ed. Overbeck, *Ephraemi Sancti... Opera Selecta*), p. 186 [15], the hero is described as "an angel of flesh" (cp. also p. 169 [20 ff.]), while in Jacob of Serug, *On virginity etc.* (ed. Overbeck, *op. cit.*), p. 387 [25 ff.], the links between virginity, paradise and the life of angels are made particularly close. Cp. also p. 8, note 23 below.

17) E.g. K. Müller, "Die Forderung der Ehelosigkeit in der alten Kirche", in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (1930), pp. 63-79.

18) Cf. in general Vööbus, *History of Asceticism...*, I, pp. 35 ff.

large number of works by writers of similar geographical provenance, such as the two pseudo-Clementine epistles *de Virginitate*, surviving only in Syriac translation.

In some communities in the East views like these were held with such seriousness that celibacy was regarded as an essential condition for baptism. This seems to have obtained well into the third century as the normal practice in practically the whole area of the Syriac-speaking churches, although it hardly survived, except marginally, as late as the fourth century, as Burkitt claimed in his influential little book, *Early Eastern Christianity* [19]).

In the early Syriac-speaking churches the term for the members of this baptised community of 'virgins', male and female, was "sons/ daughters of the *Qeyāmā*". I leave the term untranslated for the moment, for its precise meaning is still very much disputed. Perhaps the most widely held view is that advocated by Vööbus [20]) among others: *qeyāmā* is the equivalent of the Hebrew *berīth*, that is 'covenant', 'pact', and so the *benai qeyāmā*, 'sons of the covenant', are "a group of persons who keep the vow or covenant", where the vow/covenant in question is presumably to be understood as the baptismal vow. By way of an aside it might be mentioned that Vööbus [21]) and others have then gone on, tentatively, to suggest some historical link between the terminology of early Syriac-speaking Christianity and that of the Jewish Qumran community for whose members the concept of the *berīth* was of particular importance. While this suggestion is indeed intriguing, it would seem that, whatever one thinks of this particular explanation of the Syriac *qeyāmā*, the evidence that has so far been

19) See A. Vööbus, *Celibacy, a Requirement for Admission to Baptism in the Early Syrian Church* (Stockholm, 1951).

20) Vööbus, *History of Asceticism* ..., I, pp. 97 ff; cf. also *Church History* xxx (1961), pp. 19-27. A survey of the different theories is also given by S. Jargy, "Les 'fils et filles du pacte' dans la littérature monastique syriaque", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* xvii (1951), pp. 304-20.

21) Vööbus, *op. cit.*, pp. 100 ff. In the Qumran texts the phrase most frequently found is *bāʾē ha-berīth*, 'those who enter the covenant', while *benē ha-berīth*, 'sons of the covenant', in fact does not occur at all, the nearest equivalent being *benē berīthō*, 'sons of his covenant'. Elsewhere in Hellenistic Jewish literature the phrase 'sons of the covenant' is to be found in the *Psalms of Solomon* xvii 15, and *Jubilees* xv 26. In the latter, as sometimes in Rabbinic literature, the term is used in close connection with the idea of circumcision—a rite in Christianity replaced by baptism; in the light of this it is probably best to accept 'covenant' as the meaning of *qeyāmā*.

adduced for any *direct* links here with the Qumran community is so
tenuous as to be really worthless. The matter cannot be taken further
here, but reference should be made to an alternative, and at first sight
very attractive, suggestion as to the real significance of the Syriac
qeyāmā. This has recently been put forward by P. Nagel in his book
*Die Motivierung der Askese in der alten Kirche und der Ursprung des
Mönchtums* [22]). According to him, *qeyāmā* means, in this context, not
'covenant', 'stance', or any of the other meanings that have been
adduced, but 'resurrection', and the *benai qeyāmā* are thus those who
anticipate the resurrection while still in this life: they in fact correspond
to the *isangeloi* [23]) of Luke xx 36, the passage to which attention was
drawn earlier on. This explanation, at least in the form in which Nagel
puts it [24]), unfortunately runs into linguistic difficulties, for *qeyāmā*
(masculine emphatic) never seems to mean 'resurrection', and to ex-
plain it as the absolute form (also *qeyāmā*) of the feminine noun
qeyāmtā, which does mean 'resurrection', is forced, and such a usage
(i.e. construct + absolute) would be hard to parallel satisfactorily in
Syriac.

One of the best mirrors in which to view the ascetic ideals of the
early Christian communities is to be found in the apocryphal acts of
the apostles, and what is probably the most fascinating of these docu-
ments, the *Acts of Thomas*, is very much the product of early Syriac-
speaking Christianity. These Acts belong to the earliest group of the
apocryphal acts of the apostles, and go back to the second century. The
fact that the work was also popular among the Marcionites and Mani-
chaeans [25]) guarantees its ascetic character: a very strict view is taken,
for example, on the subject of marriage [26]). The basis of its teaching
consists in the contrast between the corruptible body (not, however, in

---

22) pp. 41 ff.

23) Thus Theodoret, *Historia Religiosa* (P.G. lxxxii), § 4, calls the ascetic way
of life ἡ ἀγγελικὴ πολιτεία, while Ephrem (ed. Zingerle, *Monumenta Syriaca*, I,
p. 6 lines 127-8) says ascetics are "like the angels in heaven, although they them-
selves live on earth". Cp. also p. 6 note 16.

24) The same objection does not apply to Adam's interpretation of the term
("Grundbegriffe des Mönchtums in sprachlicher Sicht", *Z.K.G.* lxv (1953/4),
pp. 224-8), which served as a starting point for Nagel.

25) Cf. A. F. J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas* (Leiden, 1962), pp. 20-1.

26) Likewise significantly water, not wine, is used for the eucharist (§ 121);
according to Epiphanius (*Panarion* xlii.3.3) this was also Marcionite practice.

itself evil) and the soul, alone capable of incorruptibility. All that pertains to the body is to be rejected, on the grounds that such things, being corruptible, are liable to hinder the soul in attaining its goal of incorruptibility. The ascetic life thus becomes an essential step on the road to salvation. One striking feature of the *Acts of Thomas* is the frequency with which the terms 'stranger' and 'foreigner' are used of the Christian in this world, and this will be found to be an extremely common theme throughout Syriac-speaking Christianity. The concept will be based on Old Testament passages such as Psalm cxxxvii 4, referring to the exile of the Israelites as in 'a foreign land' (thence applied to the life of Christians in this world), or New Testament ones like Hebrews xi 13, where the great Old Testament figures, held up as models of faith, are described as having "confessed themselves no more than strangers and passing travellers on earth". This is a theme to which reference will be made again later on.

So far we have been dealing with tendencies among the early Christian communities of the general Syro-Mesopotamian area, and only very rarely for this period do we know the names of individual ascetics. For their heirs in the fourth century and later we are much better off: in Syriac we have a large number of important ascetic works by the great fourth century writers, Aphrahat and Ephrem. Aphrahat, whose 23 surviving *Demonstrations* were written between 337 and 345, represents Syriac-speaking Christianity in its purest form, virtually uncontaminated by Greek influence. His slightly younger contemporary, Ephrem, is one of the most profilic of Syriac writers, and his highly allusive, and apparently very verbose, style, has not won him the same reputation among modern scholars—at least in this country—that he once enjoyed in antiquity, although in fact he is a writer, and above all a poet, who, provided one takes the trouble to read him carefully and sympathetically, amply rewards the effort expended. To Ephrem we owe, not only a considerable number of poetical works on ascetic subjects, but also some hymn cycles on two individual ascetics, Julian Saba, whose death is independently recorded in the local Edessene Chronicle under the year 678 of the Seleucid era, = A.D. 366/7, and his almost exact contemporary, Abraham Quidunaya [27]). But someone who prosaically wants to discover the details of the lives of these two

---

27) Ed. Lamy, *op. cit.* [p. 2 note 4], III, cols 749-836 (on Abraham), 837-936 (on Julian) ; cp. also Vööbus, *History of Asceticism . . .*, II, pp. 42-60.

ascetics would find a perusal of Ephrem's hymns on them a singularly unrewarding and frustrating task, and he would be well advised, in the case of Julian Saba, to turn to a much later, Greek, source, namely Theodoret's *Historia Religiosa*, written in the mid fifth century. This is a document of very great interest, but one that has been curiously neglected by modern scholarship: there is no reliable edition of the Greek text, and most regrettably no English translation is available The work [28]) consists of a number of short biographies of local Syrian ascetics, and the first twenty chapters are devoted to hermits already dead by 437/449 when Theodoret was writing, and among these features (ch. 2) Julian Sabas. The remaining chapters, 21-30, on the other hand, concern hermits who were still alive at the time of writing. Those hermits and recluses who form the subject of chapters 14-25 all lived in the desert around Theodoret's own see of Cyrrhus, some 60 miles North East of Antioch.

Some individual ascetics are extremely well documented, and here I am thinking in particular of the most famous of all Syrian ascetics, St. Simeon Stylites, to whom we shall be returning later.

A work of major importance for the history of asceticism in the early Syriac speaking church is Aphrahat's sixth *Demonstration* [29]), written in 337. Aphrahat's views on the ascetic life can be neatly summed up in two short quotations:

> "We should be aliens from this world, just as Christ did not belong to this world" (col. 241 [16 f]).

> "Whoever would resemble the angels, must alienate himself from men" (col. 248 [25]).

This stress on alienation [30])—separation from the world—in fact provides a clue to an understanding of the preoccupation of the early Syriac-speaking church with the ideal of virginity. In Aphrahat's terminology 'virginity' is almost synonymous with 'holiness', though the two terms, which basically have the same idea of continence, are in fact

---

28) *P.G.* lxxxii, cols. 1283-1496.

29) Ed. (with Latin translation) in *Patrologia Syriaca* I, cols. 239-312 (English translation in *Select Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, ser. II, vol. 13).

30) Compare the popular ideal of the Christian as ξένος, 'stranger' (see, for example, Klijn, *Acts of Thomas*, p. 166). Isaac of Antioch (ed. Bedjan, I p. 42[16]) holds up the apostles as models of vagrancy.

used for two different categories of persons—'virgins' referring to ascetics who have never married, while *qaddīshē*, 'holy ones', to couples who are married, but who have then agreed to adopt the ascetic life of complete continence. At first sight it is a little surprising that the word for 'holy' should have taken on this specialised meaning, but it should be remembered that in the Semitic languages the root *qdš* has the basic connotation of separateness, and so the holy man, the *qaddīshā*, is someone apart from his surroundings, someone who has alienated himself to, and is untouched by, the world he lives in. In the light of this it is not difficult to see how the term 'virginity' was adopted, not only as an ideal in the literal sense, but also as a term that could be used in a symbolic way in connection with someone who had preserved himself uncontaminated by the exterior world as a whole. Needless to say there is no great jump from this sort of attitude to the world to a completely dualistic one, and it will be recalled how popular openly dualistic systems, such as those of the Marcionites and the Manichaeans, were in the Syro-Mesopotamian area.

As was pointed out before, Aphrahat represents Syriac Christianity completely untouched by western influences. He indeed knows of 'monks', but the term he uses does not mean 'monk' in the later sense of the word with which we are familiar: his 'monks' are ascetics living either individually or in small groups. Ephrem too probably represents a pure form of Syriac Christianity, at least as far as his Nisibis period is concerned [31]. During the last ten odd years of his life, however, 363-73, which he spent in Edessa, he probably came into contact with representatives of Egyptian monasticism, although none of the works attributed to Ephrem which actually refer to cenobitic monasticism seem to be genuine [32]. The picture one gets of the life of the ascetic from Ephrem's genuine works is a remarkable one [33]: the ascetic lives in the desert or in the mountains like a wild animal, totally untouched by any of the appurtenances of civilisation, which is regarded as the

---

[31] Cf. E. Beck, "Ascétisme et monachisme chez Saint Éphrem", *L'Orient Syrien* iii (1958), pp. 273-98; „Zur Terminologie des ältesten syrischen Mönchtums", *Studia Anselmiana* xxxviii (1956), pp. 254-67.

[32] Cf. Vööbus, *Literary Critical and Historical Studies in Ephrem the Syrian*, pp. 96 ff.

[33] Cf. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism...*, II, p. 26 f.; *Literary Critical and Historical Studies...*, pp. 94-11; "Monachisme primitif dans les écrits d'Éphrem le Syrien", *L'Orient Syrien* iv (1959), pp. 299-306.

work of Satan. He lives out in the open, completely exposed to the elements and extremes of heat and cold; he eats roots and wild fruits [34]), his clothing—that is, if he had any at all, and many had not [35])—consisted of straw or leaves tied together; his hair was so shaggy [36]), and his nails so long that he resembled a bird of prey more than a human being. This type of life—which, incidentally, was not confined to Christian ascetics in this area [37])—was in fact a return to the status of primeval man [38]), or, in Christian terms, to the life of Adam in Paradise before the Fall: the ascetic was thus entirely free to be in perpetual conversation with God, while he was in complete peace and harmony with his sole companions, the wild animals.

The general impressions that one gets from Ephrem of the life of these extreme, and highly individualistic, ascetics of the Syrian deserts are readily confirmed on turning to the straight-forward accounts of their lives in Theodoret's Historia Religiosa. And one thing that immediately strikes the reader of this work are the extravagancies in which these Syrian ascetics indulged. Like the ascetics described in general terms by Ephrem, the subjects of Theodoret's short biographies completely reject anything to do with civilized life—fire, clothing, any sort of dwelling [39]). But from Theodoret we also learn details of the artificial mortifications they imposed on themselves, not content with those imposed upon them by their wild surroundings. We find them chaining themselves to rocks (the use of chains is particularly common in Syria), or yoking their necks to heavy weights, or having themselves bricked up in caves or cells, or imprisoned in cages. From sources other

---

34) E.g. an unpublished text quoted by Vööbus, *Literary Critical and Historical Studies ...*, p. 82, note 9: "They graze like wild animals off plants in the mountains".

35) See especially P. Zingerle, *Monumenta Syriaca* I, p. 5, line 88.

36) E.g. Lamy, *op. cit.* [p. 2, note 4] IV, col. 153/4: "Your hair has grown long like an eagle's" (based on Daniel iv 33). Later, when ascetics came under ecclesiastical control, rules were promulgated forbidding them to grow their hair long; cf. Vööbus, *Syriac and Arabic Documents Regarding Legislation Relative to Syrian Asceticism* (Stockholm, 1960), p. 28 (no. 5).

37) E.g. Lucian, *Mennipos* (Teubner edn., I, p. 195). Cf. also L. Bieler, *Theios Aner* (repr. Darmstadt, 1967), pp. 61 ff. Some pagan testimonia on asceticism are collected by H. Koch, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Askese und des Mönchtums in der alten Kirche* (Tübingen, 1933), texts 1-19.

38) Cf. J. Haussleiter, *Der Vegetarismus in der Antike* (Berlin, 1935), p. 67.

39) In general see A. M. J. Festugière, *Antioche païenne et chrétienne* (Paris, 1959), ch. ix, 'Traits caractéristiques de l'anchorétisme syrien'.

than Theodoret we even hear of ascetics who threw themselves into the fire [40]), or into the mouths of wild beasts, presumably thus seeking to reproduce the fates of the martyrs before them.

These extravagancies are in complete contrast to the situation in Egypt, where it is the exception to find the use of such things as chains. Whereas Egypt's *forte* was cenobitic monasticism, in Syria it was the solitary virtuoso who dominated the scene, and it is to the most famous of these, Saint Simeon Stylites, that we shall now turn.

Besides being the best known of the Syrian ascetics, Simeon also happens to be one of the best documented [41]). Theodoret's section (§ 26) on him was written while the saint was still alive, and it constitutes an excellent eyewitness account of the man [42]). In Syriac we have an important life of the saint, written soon after his death, and the product of his monastery at Telneshin [43]). Another, Greek, life also survives, attributed to a certain Anthony [44]), but the value of this has been seriously disputed, notably by the great Bollandist, Paul Peeters [45]). In point of fact, however, the Anthony life probably does have an independent value of its own, and some incidents recorded in it appear in a far less legendary form than they do in the Syriac life [46]).

Simeon must have been born about 389, of Christian parents, and he was baptised as a child. His father's occupation is not known, but he was a man of some property at any rate, for he owned flocks, which Simeon tended in his youth. Simeon himself seems to have had no formal education, and he remained illiterate all his life; his native

40) Cf. *Ephraemi Syri Sermones Duo* (ed. P. Zingerle; Brixen, 1868), p. 20.

41) Well summarised in Festugière, *op. cit.*, pp. 347 ff., and in Vööbus, *History of Asceticism* . . ., II, pp. 208 ff.; the basic study is still that of H. Lietzmann, *Das Leben des heiligen Symeon Stylites* (Texte und Untersuchungen xxxii, 4; 1908).

42) Critical edition of the Greek text in Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-18; French translation in Festugière, *op cit.*, pp. 388 ff.

43) Two recensions are available in print (an English translation of the text edited by Bedjan was made by F. Lent, in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* xxxv (1915/7), pp. 103-98, and a German one by Hilgenfeld, in Lietzmann, *op. cit.*; French summary in Festugière, *op. cit.*, pp. 357 ff.

44) Ed. Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-78; French summary in Festugière *op. cit.*, pp. 370 ff.

45) „St. Syméon Stylite et ses premiers biographes", *Analecta Bollandiana* lxi (1943), pp. 29-71 = *Le tréfonds oriental de l'hagiographie byzantine* (Brussels, 1950), pp. 92-136.

46) There are also lives in Coptic (ed. Chaine, 1948) and in Georgian (ed. Garitte, 1957).

language was Syriac. He must have been in his 'teens when he was
converted to the religious life, and significantly enough this took place,
according to Theodoret, on his hearing the Beatitudes read in church.
Probably about 403 [47]) he entered the monastery of Eusebona, by the
village of Tell ᶜAdā, some 35 miles ENE of Antioch. He remained there
for nearly ten years, but his extreme ascetic practices, despite his efforts
to hide them, became known and failed to endear him to his fellow
monks. Perhaps about 412 he finally left the monastery at Tell ᶜAdā
and removed himself to the vicinity of Telneshin (Greek Telanissos),
several miles to the north, where he was to spend the remaining forty-
seven odd years of his life.

One of the almost inevitable consequences of a life of extreme penan-
ce and mortification such as Simeon's was the publicity it attracted; in
time there would be a continuous crowd of pilgrims and sightseers, who
had come to have their sick healed, to ask his advice on almost every
subject under the sun, to lay their grievances before him, or merely just
to touch the holy man, and if possible to get a souvenir of one of the
hairs from his shirt, or the suchlike. It would appear that the Syrian
ascetics calmly accepted these crowds as yet another form of mortifica-
tion, and in this connection Theodoret has a particularly delightful
section (§ 19) on another ascetic, named Salamanes, which serves as a
good example of the complete *apatheia*, impassivity, of these ascetics.

Salamanes left his own village of Kefarsana in quest of "the quiet
life", and for this purpose he settled in a deserted hut in a neigh-
bouring village, across the river. Here he walled himself up, leaving
neither window nor door. He received a yearly ration of food, which
was conveyed to him by means of a tunnel dug under the wall. The local
bishop, learning of his reputation for sanctity, decided to ordain him to
the priesthood. To enter the saint's cell and perform the ceremony he
had to pull down part of the wall. Salamanes, however, remained totally
impervious to what was happening to him, and after the ceremony the
bishop failed to get a single word out of him, and so he had no alter-
native but to leave and repair the breach he had made in the wall on
entry. Later on, the men of Salamanes' village of origin, jealous that
another village should boast the presence of an ascetic who did not

---

47) The details of the chronology of his life are uncertain owing to the con-
flicting evidence of the sources.

really belong to them, made a raid one night, pulled down the hut, and transported the ascetic to the other side of the river, to their own village, where they built him a new hut the next morning, the saint in the meanwhile showing not the slightest concern at what was going on. A few days later the rival villagers made a return raid and recaptured the saint. At this point Theodoret breaks off, and admiringly comments on the saint's success in showing himself dead to the world.

Unlike Salamanes Simeon had made no vow of silence, and he seems to have had an ever increasing number of visitors, and the pages of the Syriac life are full of instances of miraculous healings effected by him on their behalf. As his fame spread the crowds became intolerable, and just as, in the Gospels, Jesus had retired to a boat to avoid the throng of the crowds, Simeon too found a simple answer to the same problem: it was to mount a column. At first it was of no great height, but with the passing of the years the column was gradually raised until it reached a height of forty cubits, and on this last column he spent the final thirty years of his life.

The novelty of this way of life clearly led to a good deal of criticism from certain quarters, and we are told that when some Egyptian monks first heard of Simeon's exploits they excommunicated him, although later on a good relationship was restored [47a]. Also it is significant that both Theodoret and the author of the Syriac panegyric felt it necessary to provide an apologia for Simeon's stylite life. The two apologias are in fact curiously similar, and it would seem that they both represent the arguments brought forward in Simeon's defence by the monks of his monastery at Telanissos. The arguments themselves almost entirely consist of a parade of biblical precedents for similar extravagant actions on the part of the Old Testament prophets.

But admirers easily outnumbered critics, and visitors came to see him from far and wide—not just people from the confines of the Roman Empire, writes Theodoret (§ 11), but Ishmailites, Persians, Armenians, Iberians, Homerites from the east, and from the farthest west, Spaniards, Britons and Celts. Although Simeon spent most of the day and night in prayer (spectators used to count the number of prostrations he made to while away the time), he regularly spared the latter half of the afternoon, from about 3 pm until sunset, to attend to his visitors.

47a) Evagrius, *H.E.* i, 13.

These ranged from simple peasants to high dignitaries, and it is clear
that one of the most important social roles of ascetics such as Simeon
was to serve as arbitrators to the society from which they themselves
had withdrawn [48]). But not only did Simeon himself give advice, but
his name too was used as a tool in political and ecclesiastical disputes.
Curiously, however, we do not know for certain what was his
attitude over the Council of Chalcedon, which met eight years previous
to his death; one can hardly imagine that his views on this were not
sought at some time or other [49]). Perhaps, like the Delphic Oracle, he
shrewdly left his replies ambiguous [50]).

   Although he spent his life on top of his column completely exposed
to the elements, Simeon's body survived this treatment for a surprising
number of years, and, indeed, Delehaye justly remarks on the longevity
of stylites in general [51]). Simeon's death, preceded by a short illness,
was probably undramatic [52]): only after a day or two did his disciples
realize that his accustomed motionlessness was not that of prayer, and
only then did one of them climb up the ladder to confirm that he was
dead. His body was transported in great pomp (and with a strong
military escort, to prevent any attempts to snatch it away) to Antioch,
recently devastated by a serious earthquake. In death the saint was even
less safe than he was in life from the attention of pilgrims, eager for
relics, and the various parts of his body eventually ended up in a large
number of different places [53]).

   What had started out as a practical means of avoiding the press of
the crowds eventually ended up by becoming a separate mode of

---

48) See in general P. Brown, "The role of the holy man in early Byzantine
society", forthcoming in *Journal of Roman Studies*; cf. also Vööbus, *History
of Asceticism . . .*, II, pp. 377 ff.

49) Both sides claimed his support: Evagrius (*H.E.* ii, 10) quotes a letter
attributed to Simeon that supports the council, while in Syriac there are several
anti-Chalcedonian letters claiming his authorship (edited, with English translation,
by C. C. Torrey, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* xx (1899), pp. 253-76;
German translation in Lietzmann, *op. cit.*, p. 188-92).

50) In the sixth century the Chalcedonians made great efforts to win over
certain in stylites to their cause—without success, according to John of Ephesus,
Lives of Eastern Saints (Patrologia Orientalis xvii, p. 98).

51) *Les saints stylites* (Brussels, 1923), p. cxliv.

52) The following is based on the account in the life of Antony.

53) For modern Greek claims, for example, see O. Meinardus, "A study of the
relics of Saints of the Greek Orthodox Church", *Oriens Christianus* liv (1970),
pp. 247-8.

monastic life [53a]). Stylites sprang up all over the place, and special rules were even drawn up for them [54]). Some of these men, like St. Simeon the younger in the sixth century, who took up residence on Mons Admirabilis, between Antioch and the sea, are well known, while others, such as Joshua the Stylite, accredited with an important Syriac chronicle covering the years 494-506, or John the Stylite, a correspondent of the seventh century writer and polymath, Jacob of Edessa, are to-day little more than mere names. Delehaye, in his book *Les Saints Stylites*, had no difficulty in finding instances of medieval stylites, and was even able to adduce a couple of nineteenth century examples.

The magnificent church and monastery that sprung up on the site of Simeon's pillar still survive, remarkably well preserved [55]). It was no doubt buildings such as these that another Syriac writer, Isaac of Antioch, had in mind when he complained [56]):

> "They (*sc.* the monks) have deserted the (spiritual) heights, and have plumbed the depths with their many grandiose building activities".

Isaac, who perhaps belongs to the late fifth, or early sixth, century, represents the yearning that many felt for the traditional individualistic type of Syrian asceticism, once the more organised cenobitic monasticism had become established in Syria. To Isaac the agricultural and commercial activities of the large new monasteries that where springing up in his day represented a denial of the true ideals of the ascetic life, which in his eyes should be completely cut off from all ties with this world. 'The sun blushed, he writes [57]), to see monks who had turned into merchants". The old ideals were indeed continued, despite attempts

---

53a) It is most unlikely that Simeon's stylite life had any connection with the practice of the pagan priests at Hierapolis/Mabbug, as described in Lucian's *De Dea Syra*.

54) Thus some of Jacob of Edessa's *Canons* are specifically aimed at stylites: Vööbus, *Documents...*, p. 95 (no. 2), 96 (no. 9). Simeon himself is accredited with some 'rules', cf. Vööbus, *Syrische Kanonssammlungen* (C.S.C.O., Subsidia 35; 1970), pp. 138 ff.

55) Cf. J. Lassus, *Sanctuaires chrétiens de Syrie* (Paris, 1947), pp. 129-32, and especially G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord* (Paris, 1953), I, pp. 223-76. For the later history of the monastery see J. Nasrallah, "Le couvent de Saint-Siméon l'Alépin", *Parole de l'Orient* i (1970), pp. 327-56.

56) Ed. Bedjan, I, p. 29[9].

57) Ed. Bedjan, I, p. 41 [6]. The same attitude is nicely illustrated in the gentle rebuke a nameless ascetic administered to John of Ephesus (*Lives of the Eastern Saints, Patrologia Orientalis* xvii, pp. 257-8).

on the part of the ecclessiastical authorities to bring its practicers under
their control, but usually it was only among fringe groups like the
Audians and Messalians, regarded by the authorities as heretical [58]).

Reading the various sources for Simeon's life, one cannot help being
struck by the man's simplicity and obvious holiness. He is a figure, who,
while foreign to us who are heirs of western Christianity, is less un-
familiar in the context of eastern tradition, where one might compare
him with some of the famous holy men of nineteenth century Russia,
such as St. Serafim of Sarov. Far from being a useless member of the
society from which he had so completely alienated himself, the ascetic
eventually serves that same society in his new role as *pneumatophoros*.
The ascetic, like the martyr before him, is essentially regarded as the
successor to the biblical prophets, and it is significant that the justifica-
tion that the monks of Telanissos offered for Simeon's way of life
consisted simply in adducing the examples of the Old Testament
prophets.

The Syriac panegyric calls Simeon the 'head of the mourners' (*abīlē*,
the term is derived from the Beatitudes), and this may help us to under-
stand something of the motivation that lies behind the extraordinary
lives of men such as Simeon. Theirs was a life of mourning, not just
for their own sins, but also for those of mankind in general. Asceticism
has in fact thus become an 'instrumentum satisfactionis' [59]): it is a
means of regaining paradise. But this is of course only one aspect of
the matter, and the 'mourning' also consists in mourning for, and
participating in, the sufferings of Christ. Thus, in the writings of
Aphrahat the 'imitation of Christ' consists primarily in a participation
in his sufferings [60]), and the same idea is very prominent in Ephrem's
ascetic works: to 'take up the cross' means sharing in Christ's suffering
and passion by means of mortification and ascetic practice. "If you
truly belong to Christ, writes Ephrem [61]), you must clothe yourself in
his passion". This emphasis on the suffering that a true Christian must
bear is already found in one of Tatian's additions, in his Diatessaron,
to the traditional Gospel text: at Matthew xix 21 (and parallels), to the

---

58) Cf. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism ...*, II, pp. 123 ff.

59) Nagel, *op. cit.*, p. 62. Cf. H. Musurillo in *Traditio* xii (1956), pp. 23-4.

60) E.g. *Demonstration* vi, (*Patrologia Syriaca* I), col. 241 [22]: "Let us share
in (Christ's) suffering, for thus we shall live (i.e. be saved) at his resurrection".

61) Lamy, *op. cit.*, IV, col. 171. On this theme in Ephrem see in general Vöö-
bus, *Literary Critical and Historical Studies ...*, pp. 104-5.

words "if you would be perfect, go and sell what you possess", Tatian caracteristically added "and take your cross and come after me" [62]). This concept of the cross of suffering to be borne by every would-be follower of Christ is clearly a fundamental one in the Syrian tradition, and it is only through a realisation of this that one can hope to understand something of the motivation behind these extraordinary athletes of the ascetic life.

Theodoret ended his life of Simeon by saying that all he had done was to provide 'a mere drop', which, however, he hoped might give some indication of the 'rain' as it actually was. In drawing to a close I should like to borrow his words, pointing out that numerous facets of this intriguing subject have necessarily had to be passed over in silence, and that what has been described does no more than give a few of the main outlines.

---

62) Cf. Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac* (C.S.C.O., Subsidia; 1951), p. 200. In a similar vein Ephrem expands Matthew x 39 (and parallels) : "Everyone who seeks to find his soul shall lose it here in *afflictions*" (Zingerle, *Monumenta Syriaca* I, p. 7, lines 181-2).

THE ANTI-PHILOSOPHICAL POLEMIC AND GNOSTIC SOTERIOLOGY IN 'THE TREATISE ON THE RESURRECTION' (CG I, 3),

BY

LUTHER H. MARTIN, JR.
Burlington, Vermont, U.S.A.

The theme of "The Treatise on the Resurrection" (CG I, 3),[1] is Gnostic soteriology. To understand the hope of the author of this treatise is to begin with his understanding of the world in which he lives, that is to say, that situation or condition which calls for salvation. It is out of this existential condition and as an answer to its deficiencies that any soteriological hope is named.

The author of CG I, 3 understands philosophy and the philosophers, against whom he polemicizes, as paradigmatic of existence "in this world" (CG I, 3: 46.7-11). This essay will examine the nature of the philosophical position as understood by the author of the treatise, the nature of the world for which the philosophers are paradigmatic, and the ground which this provides for his own naming of soteriological hope.

The opening phrase of the treatise, *un hajne* (43-25) establishes the polemical context. Puech notes that this phrase is a relatively common Greek opening (*eisin hoi* or *eisi tines, hoi*), with many examples in patristic literature.[2] However, he does not note its frequent polemical designation. In the Synoptic gospels this phrase is often used in a neutral sense to define both positive designations (Matt. 16.28 and parallels Mk. 9.1 and Lk. 9.27) as well as the polemical. The latter appears most frequently in connection with the "scribes and Pharisees" (Matt. 9.3; 12.38; Mk. 2.6; 7.1; 12.13; Lk. 6.2; 20.27, 39; *cf.* also Jn. 1.24; 9.16, 40; and Acts 23.9). This phrase also occurs

---

1) *Editio princeps*: Michel Malinine, Henri-Charles Puech, and Gilles Quispel, editors, aided by R. McL. Wilson and J. Zandee, *De Resurrectione (Epistula ad Rheginum)*. (Stuttgart/Zürich: Rascher Verlag, 1963).

2) *Editio princeps*, Notes Critiques to 43.25, where the editors cite Chrysostomus Baur, *Initia Patrum graecorum*, vol. I, Studi e Testi, 180 (Città del Vaticano, 1955), pp. 254-255; and M. Vatasso, *Initia Patrum aliorumque scriptorum ecclesiasticorum*, Studi e Testi, 17 (Rome, 1908), p. 494.

as a polemical designation in the book of Acts (Acts 15.24; 17.32; and 28.24). However, it is in the Pauline epistles that this phrase becomes fixed as a polemical formula (Rom. 3.3, 8; I Cor. 4.18; 8.7; 10.7-10; 15.12, 34; II Cor. 10.12), and was so taken up by the deutero-Pauline tradition (I Tim. 1.3; 5.15; 6.10, 20 f.; *cf.* also the Apocalypse 2.2, 9, 14 f.). This polemical formula is especially apparent in the letters of Ignatius where his opponents are always characterized by *tines* (Ign. Eph. 7.1; 8.1; 9.1; Mag. 4.1; Trall. 9.1; 10.1; Phil. 3.3; 6.1; 7.1, 2; 8.2; Smyr. 2.1; 5.1, 2. [3]) In this opening passage which contains the polemical formula, the author of the treatise directs five specific charges against his opponents.

The first charge directed against the opponents is that they have as their goal (*skopos*) the desire to learn many things (43.25-27). *Meete* ("be successful," "hit the mark") in 43.30 confirms the meaning of *skopos* here as "target" or "goal."[4]) This image, a favorite in diatribe style, is derived from the Sophist tradition where it has reference to one's aim throughout one's whole life, i.e., one's life orientation. As the author of CG I, 3 is concerning himself with no less ultimate a question than soteriology, he is employing this sense of *skopos* to also characterize his opponents.

This "life-goal" is *sbō ahah* (= *manthanein polla*). *Manthanein* is attested since Homer in a philosophical sense. [5]) However, we read in CH Exc. IIB that philosophy leads to piety.[6]) Hermes tells Tat that the one "who pursues philosophy to its highest reach will learn ([*math*]*ēsetai*) where Reality is (*pou estin hē alētheia*) and what it is; and having learnt this (*kai mathōn*), he will be yet more pious." [7])

---

3) *Cf.* H. D. Betz, "The Resurrection of the Flesh in Ignatius of Antioch and in the Gnostic Document 'De Resurrection' of the Nag Hammadi Discovery" (1964), unpublished.

4) On the meaning of the Greek loan word *skopos*, the editors refer to M. Harl, "Le guetteur et la cible: les deux sens de *skopos* dans la langue religieuse des chrétiéns," in *Revue des Études Grecques*, XXXIV (1961), pp. 450 ff. (Notes Critiques to 43.27).

5) K. H. Rengstorf, "*manthanō*," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, Vol. IV, 1942), pp. 393-399.

6) CH Exc. IIB.1.

7) CH Exc. IIB.3. Walter Scott's emendation, *Hermetica* (1924. Reprint. London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, Vol. I, 1968), p. 391.

It is clear from 47.15 f. that Rheginos, like the opponents, is also "eager to learn." What is polemicized against, therefore, is not itself the desire to learn, but rather the object of learning, *polla.* Puech notes that *manthanein polla* is often used in a pejorative sense and he cites Heraclitus and Democritus as examples. [8]) Van Unnik refers also to Porphyry, *ad Marcellam* 9 and *The Sentences of Sextus.* [9]) Specifically, the charge of "learning many things," is a charge which originates in anti-Sophist polemic.

In the *Lovers*, a Platonic dialogue generally regarded as inauthentic, but valuable for knowledge of the conception of Socrates in the fourth century, [10]) we have such an anti-Sophist polemic. Socrates questions a humanistic student on the nature of philosophy and receives the answer: "Why, just what Solon called it . . . . And ever, as I older grow, I learn yet more and more *(polla didaskomenos)."* [11]) In this dialogue, Socrates rejects the view that philosophy is *polumathia.* [12]) Yet this understanding is what came to characterize the Sophists. In the Euthydemus of Plato, Socrates accuses the Sophists of playing a game, because if one learned many such things, or even all of them *(ei kai polla tis ē kai panta ta toiauta mathoi),* i.e., the Sophistical games of learning, one would be no nearer knowing what things really are. [13]) Likewise, in CH XI Hermes has succeeded in learning many things, but like the opponents in CG I, 3 has not learned truth (43.32-34). This has rather to do with faith. In CH XI.1 Hermes says:

> Many men have told me many and diverse things *(epei polla pollōn kai tauta diaphora)* concerning the universe *(peri tou pantos)* and God, and yet I have not learnt the Truth *(egō to alēthes ouk emathon).* I ask you therefore, Master, to make this matter clear to me. You, and you alone, I shall believe *(pisteusaimi),* if you will show me the truth about it.

A technical term of Greek philosophy, *manthanein*, is also a technical term of the Greek mysteries "to denote reception of the *hieros logos* by

---

8) Notes Critiques to 43.26.

9) W. C. van Unnik, "The Newly Discovered Gnostic 'Epistle to Rheginos on the Resurrection: I and II,'" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, XV (1964), p. 166. (A copy of *The Sentences of Sextus* is part of the Nag Hammadi library; CG XII.1).

10) F. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy, Vol. I: Greece and Rome* (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1963), p. 134.

11) *The Lovers*, 133c.

12) *Ibid.*, 133e, *cf.* also 137b and 139.

13) Euthy. 278b; *cf.* also Sophists 233d-e.

the initiates." [14]) Rengstorf cites two traditions which suggest this meaning, the *Corpus Hermeticum* and Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*. [15])

In a vision, Poimandres asks the seer *ti boulei akousai kai theasasthai, kai noēsas mathein kai gnōnai?* (CH I.1). The recipient answers: *mathein thelō ta onta kai noēsai tēn toutōn phusin kai gnōnai ton theon* ... Poimandres in turn answers: *eche nōi sōi hosa theleis matheein, kagō se didaxō* (CH I.3.). [16]) In addition to faith, in CH I.3, as in CH XI.1, mystical learning must be imparted by a teacher. In CG I, 3: 43.25-27, the learning appropriate to Rheginos must also be imparted to an initiate by a teacher. This relationship of the author of the treatise to Rheginos is indicated by the address "my son" (43.25; 46.6; and 47.3).

The second charge directed against the opponents by the author of CG I, 3 is that "they seize upon questions which lack their solution." Again, *zētēma* is a technical term from Greek philosophy referring to questions of a philosophical nature. [17]) It is often employed with *hē lusis* (= *pbōl*) to indicate a theme of inquiry and discussion. [18]) If we can assume that the commonality of the distinction in Greek between the more substantive connotation of the suffix -*ma* (of *zētēma*) and the processive connotation associated with the suffix -*sis* (of *zētēsis*) has been maintained in the Coptic, we can understand here "academic questions." [19]) For this distinction at the beginning of the second A.D., *cf.* Acts 15.2.

The "raising of questions which have no answer," even more than "learning much," is a common accusation directed against the Sophists. Already by the fourth century B.C., Socratic disputation had become an occasion on which to practice one's powers of controversy, victory

---

14) Rengstorf, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

15) Although a word corresponding to *manthanein* is lacking in Apuleius, the portrayal of the initiation, supported by murals, clearly establish these Greek mysteries as having a didactic character. *Ibid.*

16) Cited by Rengstorf, *ibid.*

17) Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*. A new (ninth) edition, revised and augmented by Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 756.

18) Notes Critiques to 43.28. *Cf.* also van Unnik, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

19) C. D. Buck and W. Petersen, *A Reverse Index of Greek Nouns and Adjectives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, no date), p. 221.

being pursued rather than truth. [20]) Thus Socrates accuses the Sophists of confining their questions only to what can be gathered from discourse. [21]) The Sophist is so skillkul in this that he can confute with equal success anything which anyone says, whether false or true. [22]) As the Sophist was not interested in the pursuit of any objective truth, [23]) he was able to allow more than one opinion on every subject. [24]) "To raise questions without answers," therefore, is a fairly accurate representation of the Sophistic position, the questioning, the rhetoric, the discourse itself being the goal (*skopos*) of the learning, not in any sense the pursuit of Truth to which the discourse might lead. Indeed, Socratic dialectic itself often arrived at no definite result. [25])

Again, as with the desire to learn, Rheginos is also "guilty" of raising questions (44.3-6). However, the questions of Rheginos have a solution (*pbōl*); cf. 44.39-45.9. Both Peel and the editors of the *editio princeps* agree that the "solution" referred to in 45.5 applies both to the Savior and to the explanations he brings to certain problems. [26]) It would seem, therefore, that what the opponents, referred to in 43.25 ff., lack is the solution in the sense of the redeemer, i.e., their questioning is carried on outside of the sphere of faith.

If, then, the opponents are successful in this life-long practice of Sophistry, "they think great things about themselves." This is the third charge against the opponents. If our interpretation is correct, we must reject Haardt's emendation of the plural demonstrative pronoun *neei* in 43.30 to the singular *peei*, thereby making the antecedent *pbōl* rather than *hnzētēma*. [27] It is the questioning itself, i.e.,

---

20) H. Jackson, "Sophists," *Encyclopedia Britannica* 11th edition (1910-1911) Vol. 25, p. 420. *Cf.* Aristophanes, *The Clouds* 99.
21) Soph. 240a.
22) Euthy. 272a.
23) Copleston, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
24) *Ibid.*, p. 91.
25) *Ibid.*, p. 106.
26) Malcolm L. Peel, *The Epistle to Rheginos: A Valentinian Letter on the Resurrection*. The New Testament Library (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969), pp. 39, 64 f.
27) Robert Haardt, " 'Die Abhandlung über die Auferstehung' des Codex Jung aus der Bibliothek gnostischer koptischer Schriften von Nag Hammadi: Bemerkungen zu ausgewahlten Motiven. Teil I: Der Text," *Kairos*, XI (1969), p. 2, nén. 6.

Sophistry, which is the pedagogic goal and the source of pride, not the answers. The charge raised by the author of CG I, 3 against the philosopher opponents, therefore, is that their life-long goal is to learn many things by Sophistry, in which they take great pride.

The editors note that this phrase exactly translates the Greek: *megala (mega) phronousin eph'heautois.* [28]) *Cf.* also *megalophronein,* which is an idiom for "to be arrogant." [29]) This phrase is reminiscent of the Pauline polemical expression *phusioō* (e.g. I Cor. 4.6, 19; 5.2; 8.1; 13.4; Col. 2.18. *Cf.* also Ign. Trall. 4.1; Smyr. 6.1), which is also an idiom for arrogance or pride. [30])

By contrast, Rheginos seeks *hn uhlag.* We follow the English translators of the phrase in CG I, 2: 24.8 f. and 41.3 in translating this phrase "gently." This "gentle seeking" of Rheginos is opposed to the seeking of the opponents which leads to pride or arrogance. In the Sahidic New Testament (SaNT), *hlog* occurs five times; three of these occurrences translate *chrēstos.* [31]) It is thus possible to conclude that Rheginos is seeking properly for he is seeking *en chrēstos* = *en christos* (*cf. chrēstos* as a Christological title in CG I, 3: 43.37), i.e., he seeks from the posture of faith.

Again we find that *mntnag* is an appellation not reserved solely for the opponents, but also for the saved, which presumably includes Rheginos. In 46.20 f. those who believe, the true Gnostics, are called "great." [32]) The following lines further identify them as "those whose

---

28) Notes Critiques to 43.31-32.

29) Liddell-Scott, *op. cit.,* p. 1087.

30) Also Puech, Notes Critiques to 43.31-32, van Unnik, *op. cit.,* p. 146, and Peel, *op. cit.,* p. 52.

31) Michel Wilmet, *Concordance du Nouveau Testament Sahidique.* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium (Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO), vol. 185, subsidia, vol. 15, 1959, p. 1432.

32) The text reads *nat,* which is unknown in Subakhmimic and has no known correspondence in the other dialects. Peel, following Zandee, proposes to read *at(mou)* which fits well with the following phrase (Notes Critiques to 46.21 and Peel, *op. cit.,* p. 78). Kasser (*Compléments au Dictionnaire Copte de Crum* [Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1964], p. 38) suggests a variant form of *aiai.* In the qualitative, which he thinks would most likely be represented here, the word means "great, goodly, honored." Kasser proposes that this be read in parallel with the preceding phrase: "so that it is a great one whom is believed, great are those who believe." The problem of explaining the *n* still remains. We have followed Barns (Review, *Journal of Theological Studies,* XV (1964), p. 165) and Haardt (*op. cit.,* p. 3, n. 11) who suggest emending *not* to *nag* thus maintaining this same parallel.

thought shall not perish." In the SaNT *mntnog* is an appellation
reserved in all instances but one (II Cor. 12.7) to name the greatness
or majesty of God. Simon Magus taught that he was "somebody great"
(Iren. *Adv. Haer.* I.23.1, i.e., divine; Acts 8.4-25). (*Cf.* SaNT Lk. 1.49;
9.43; Acts 2.11; 19.27; 1 Tim. 2.2; Heb. 1.3; 8.1; 2 Pet. 1.16). In
The Gospel of Truth, *mntnag* is an appellation of the Son (CG I, 2:41.2).
Thus, from a Gnostic perspective, it would seem that the opponents
are not simply manifesting pride, but the ultimate in prideful self-
estimation, apotheosis. [33])

The fourth charge against the opponents by the author of CG I, 3
is that they have not stood within the Word of Truth. In the SaNT
ahe erat= is a phrase common to the Pauline epistles and is used to
translate *histanai*. [34]) It is used primarily in an hortatory sense by
Paul to indicate Christian existence: "stand in grace" (Rom. 5.2;
cf. I Pet. 5.12); "stand firm in faith" (Rom. 11.20; I Cor. 16.13;
II Cor. 1.24; *cf.* I Pet. 5.9); "stand in the gospel" (I Cor. 15.1;
Phil. 1.27); or, "stand firm in the Lord" (Phil. 4.1; I Thess. 3.8;
cf. also Gal. 5.1). In the deutero-Pauline literature the meaning of
this expression shifted from the Pauline existential meaning to a dog-
matic meaning, e.g., II Thes. 2.15: "stand firm and hold to the
traditions," (*cf.* also I Pet. 5.9, 5.2). The phrase occurs only once in
Ignatius (Pol. 3.1) but definitely carries this same deutero-Pauline
dogmatic sense:

> Let not those that appear to be plausible, but teach strange doctrine, over-
> throw you. Stand firm.... (*stēthi hedraios*)

The author of CG I, 3 employs this deutero-Pauline dogmatic sense.
Plogos ntmēe is the necessarry dogmatic measure by which the op-
ponents are judged. *Cf.* also the dogmatic use in 48.33 in comparison
with 1 Pet. 5.9 and 5.2.

In II Cor. 6.7 Paul commends himself *en logōi alētheias* even as
the author of the treatise commends himself in *plogos ntmēe* in 43.32 ff.
In II Cor. Paul used the commendation in truth against those who

---

33) Clement of Alexandria notes that the true Gnostic considers that he "has
already become God." (Protrepticus VIII.4).

34) Walter Ewing Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* (Oxford: At the Clarendon
Press, 1939), p. 536; Wilmet, *op. cit.*, vol. 183, subsidia, vol. 13 (1958), pp. 1155 ff.

boast (*cf.* esp. II Cor. 10.7 ff.), a people Paul declares to be without understanding (II Cor. 10.12). We can compare Paul's polemic in II Cor. with that of the author of the treatise in 43.25 ff. where those who are judged to stand outside the Word of Truth still think great things of themselves. In Eph. 1.13, the Word of Truth is heard only in Christ. Compare CG I, 3:43.35 ff., where in contrast to the opponents, truth is received only through "our Savior, our Lord Christ." In II Tim. 2.15, a Christian is described as one who "rightly handles" the Word of Truth. This means, as we are informed in II Tim. 2.16, to avoid godless chatter. Compare CG I, 3: 43.27 ff., where the opponents "seize upon questions that lack their solution."

In Col. 1.5, we learn that the Word of Truth is the gospel. Peel understands this phrase in CG I, 3 also to refer to the gospel, and more specifically, "it appears to refer to the 'written' Gospel as opposed to the 'oral.' " [35]) He cites I Cor. 15.1b-c as parallel to the passage in CG I, 3: ". . . I preached to you the gospel, which you received, in which you stand . . ." We would agree with Peel that I Cor. 15.1b-c is a parallel to CG I, 3 : 43.32 ff., but disagree that "gospel" in I Cor. 15.1 refers to the written gospel. Rather, as Conzelmann has pointed out, "gospel" in I Cor. 15.1, as in II Cor. 11.7 and Gal. 1.11, is used in the formal and technical sense of preaching or message. [36]) It is this sense of the Word of Truth to which Justin refers in the "Fragments of a Work on the Resurrection" 1 :

> it is free, and carries its own authority, disdaining to fall under any skilful argument, or to endure the logical scrutiny of its heavens. But it would be believed for its own nobility, and for the confidence due to him who sends it. Now the word of truth is sent from God; wherefore the freedom claimed by the truth is not arrogant. [37])

In CG I, 3, the Word of Truth is likewise free from the sophistry of "skilful argument," and the resulting arrogance. It "carries its own authority" as that saving knowledge which is received from the Savior (43.35-44.3; 49.37-50.1). In his prologue to the Corinthian correspondence, Marcion refers to "the word of truth from the apostle" which

---

35) Peel, *op. cit,,* p. 53.

36) H. Conzelmann, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther.* Meyer Kommentar, V. 11th edition. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1969), p. 295, n. 18.

37) Trans. by M. Dods in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I (Buffalo: The Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886), p. 294.

was given to the Corinthians who were subsequently perverted by
"the wordy eloquence of philosophy." [38])

If our identification of the technical language in CG I, 3: 43.25-35
as the product of anti-Sophist polemic has any validity, we may mention
at this point the well-known fact that the Sophists, in reaction against
the natural philosophy of the pre-Socratics, abandoned any search for
alētheia as impossible, or at least not rewarding, and substituted for
alētheia the search for *aretē*. Thus in answer to the question, what does
Protagoras, the Sophist, have to teach a pupil, Plato has him answer,
not Truth, but

> The proper care of his personal affairs, so that he may best manage his own
> household, and also of the state's affairs, so as to become a real power in
> the city, both as speaker and man of action. [39])

In Greek thought *alētheia* can denote an aspect of *logos*, as truth in
philosophical inquiry, both having the sense of "revealing" or
"indicating." [40]) Likewise, *alētheia* and *pistis* are associated as it is
possible to rely on either. [41]) In CG I, 3, the opponents are characterized
both as "not standing in the Word of Truth" (43.32 ff.) and as not
having faith (44.8 ff.; 46.3 ff.), whereas the believers have "come to
know Truth" (44.1 f.).

Alētheia later takes on a soteriological sense. "The *alētheia* is closed
to man as such, and he comes to share in it only when the limits of
humanity are transcended, whether in ecstasy or by revelation from
the divine sphere." [42]) It is this sense of a revealed Word of Truth
which is represented by the author of CG I, 3 over against the philo-
sophical sense of his opponents (43.35-44.3).

We come now to yet another charge against the opponents which is
supportive of the author's opinion that his opponents do not stand
in the Word of Truth, namely, "they seek rather their Rest."

In the Notes Critiques tto 43.35, Puech points out that *nhuo* is
equivalent to the Greek *pleion, epi pleion*, or *mallon malista*. He prefers
epi pleion and cites as parallels II Tim. 2.16; 3.9; and I Clem. 18.3.

---

38) R. M. Grant, *Second-Century Christianity* (London: S.P.C.K., 1957), p. 90.
39) Plato, Protag. 318e.
40) R. Bultmann, "*alētheia*," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*,
op. cit., vol. I (1933), pp. 238 f.
41) *Ibid.*, p. 239.
42) *Ibid.*, p. 241.

The sense is clearly one of contrast, as in 48.13. The author of CG I, 3, therefore, is contrasting the verb *shine* (= *zēteo*) which characterizes the opponents (43.34) with the verb *ji* (*paralambanein*) which characterizes the "faithful" (43.35-44.3). *Zēteō* is a Greek technical term for philosophical inquiry. [43]) This passage qualifies the *zētēma* with which the opponents are occupied (43.28), at least in the opinion of the author of the treatise, as questions concerning "Rest." *Mtan* here is clearly the Gnostic soteriological category *anapausis*. [44]) Without benefit of standing in the Word of Truth and by the raising of questions which lack solutions, the opponents of the author of CG I, 3 seek their own Rest through the Sophistic technique of learning much.

In CG I, 3 : 46.3-13, the author of the treatise further contrasts the position of faith with the position of the opponents, now explicitly named as philosophy. The phrase *oweei cmfpisteue* en ("one who does not believe") in 46.3-4 picks up the theme of lack of faith stated in 44.8-9 : *hah oei napistos* ("many who are unbelieving"). However, whereas *pistis* in 44.9 has *anastasis* for its object, *pisteuein* is used in 46.3 ff. intransitively; *pistis* is not placed over against *apistis* but over against *peismonē* (46.5-7). An exception to the "philosophers who are in this place" who pursue their goals by the art of persuasion is the philosopher who believes (46.8 f.). Because of his faith, this philosopher will be resurrected, and not by the art of persuasion (46.10-13). Clearly to be associated with the sphere against which the author of CG I, 3 polemicizes is the sphere of faithlessness characterized by persuasion and the representatives of persuasion, the philosophers.

Peismonē is a characteristic of philosophy. That the philosopher as the one who persuades (46.3-13) is to be associated with those who ask questions (43.27 f.) can be demonstrated by a passage from Justin :

> I too, therefore, expect to be plotted against and fixed to the stake, by some of those I have named, or perhaps by Crescens, that lover of bravado and boasting; for the man is not worthy of the name of philosopher who publicly bears witness against us in matters which he does not understand (i.e., the Christian faith) ... But if my questions and his answers have been made known to you, you are already aware that he is acquainted with none of our

---

43) H. Greeven, "*zēteō*," *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, op. cit.*, vol. II (1935), p. 896.

44) G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 115 ff.; Notes Critiques to 43.35-36; and Peel, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

matters; or, if he is acquainted with them, but through fear of those who might
hear him, does not dare to speak out, like Socrates, he proves himself, as
I said before, no philosopher, but an opinionative man...[45])

This passage is a play on the Greek *philosophos*; associated with it,
is "bravado and boasting *(philopsophos kai philokompos)*" and "opinion-
ative man" *(philodoxos)*.[46]) We have already seen the pride exhibited
by the opponents in CG I, 3: 43.29 ff. It then seems relatively clear
that the argument of 46.3-13 proceeds as follows: The important thing
for the pneumatic is faith, not persuasion, especially the national per-
suasion characteristic of the philosopher (46.3-7). The nature of this
faith is a belief in the spiritual resurrection (46.7-8). One of the
philosophers does have this faith, and because of it he will arise, not
because of his philosophizing (46.8-10). The point made is that men,
including the learned philosophers, do not save themselves. Gnosis is
not philosophical (rational, natural) knowledge; it is revealed know-
ledge, a matter of faith and not of rational pursuit (46.10-13).

The *pistis/peismonē* motif is a relatively common one in the Pauline
school. We learn from Gal. 5.8, for Paul at least, that: *hē peismonē
ouk ek tou kalountos humas*; rather, it is the work of man and thus
opposed to faith. *(Cf.* also I Cor. 2.4). In Ign. Rom. III.3 we read
that over against faithfulness:

> *ou peismonēs to ergon alla megethous estin ho christianismos.*

Here, as in Paul (Gal. 5.8, Phil. 3.3), "persuasion" is the work of
man, specifically, of the philosopher, with which men of faith have
nothing to do.[47]) Clement of Alexandria (Strom. XI), commenting
on Galatians, writes:

> 'Since, when we were children,' says the same Apostle (Paul), 'we were kept in
> bondage under the rudiments of the world. And the child, though heirs,
> differeth nothing from a servant, till the time appointed of the father.
> Philosophers, then, are children unless they 'have been made men by
> Christ.'[48])

---

45) *Second Apology* III. Trans. by A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, *Ante-Nicene
Fathers* I, *op. cit.,* p. 189.

46) *Ibid.,* nn. 3 and 4.

47) W. Bauer, *Die Briefe des Ignatius von Antiochia.* Handbuch zum Neuen
Testament: Ergänzungsband 2 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1923),
p. 247.

48) *Ante-Nicene Fathers, op. cit.,* p. 312.

Likewise Justin, in his *Dialogue with Trypho,* elevates faith above the reason of the philosophers (*cf.* esp. chap. V and VII). *Cf.* also the *Letter of Aristeas* 235 where God is placed superior to philosophy.

Pistis is used often to designate the faith of the pneumatic. Thus Heracleon in his exegesis of John 4.46 ff. (fr. 40) interprets the phrase "unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe" as referring to those who "had the nature to be persuaded through works and sense-perception, and not to believe a word (*logos*)." In fr. 19 we read that the Samaritan woman was "persuaded" that Jesus was a prophet. But in fr. 20 we read that "Earlier, Jesus did not say, 'Believe me, woman;' now he thus commands her." Whereas both persuasion and faith are possible, faith marks a higher and more perfect state characteristic of the pneumatic. We read in *Exc. Theod.* 61.8:

> In this way, therefore, the psychic elements are raised and saved, but the spiritual natures which believe, receive a salvation superior to theirs, ...

It is the psychics who can perhaps be persuaded, but persuasion must lead to faith, thus "philosophical" or rational persuasion is not the answer as this is an end in itself. In *Exc. Theod.* 56.3-4 the psychic is described as having free will and thus has the capacity for both faith and incorruptibility (*pistis kai aphtharsia*) as well as for unbelief and corruption (*apistia kai phthora*).

The author of CG I, 3 seems to presuppose the tripartite anthropology characteristic of Valentinian Gnosis. The fleshly man is one with no belief at all, one who lives according to human, rational pursuits. This fleshly man, different from the psychic man, has not even the capacity for persuasion to faith. The pneumatic man, on the other hand, is the man of faith by nature. In between is the psychical man who, having the *capacity* for faith, can perhaps be so brought to full spiritual awareness. [49] It is this understanding which justifies the writing of such a treatise as CG I, 3.

We have seen that much of the language used by the author of CG I, 3 in 43.25-44.3 is technical language from Greek philosophy. These technical terms, in and of themselves, prove nothing, as they are not limited to the sphere of Sophistry. However, the clustering

---

49 *Cf.* Iren. *Adv. Haer.* I.6.1. where the *psychikoi* are strengthened by works and faith; the *pneumatikoi* are saved, being by nature spiritual. I am indebted to John Turner for this reference.

of these terms in CG I, 3: 43.25-35, in a polemical context, together with the author's naming of his opponents in 46.3-14 as "philosophers," indicates that the author of CG I, 3 is indeed engaged in anti-philo-sophical (Sophist) polemic.

This anti-Sophistic position is already well-illustrated from the first century A.D. writings of Philo. In *de Abrah.* he writes of the "worth-less man,"

> whose life is one long restlessness, (who) haunts market-places, theatres, law-courts, council-halls, assemblies, and every group and gathering of men; his tongue he lets loose for unmeasured, endless, indiscriminate talk, bringing chaos and confusion into everything, mixing true with false, fit with unfit, public with private, holy with profane, sensible with absurd, because he has not been trained to that silence which in season is most excellent.
>
> (*de Abrah.* 20)

or again,

> For being aware beforehand of the ways of thinking that would mark the men of future ages, how they would be intent on what looked probable and plausible, with much in it that could be supported by argument, but would not aim at sheer truth; and how they would trust phenomena rather than God, admiring sophistry more than wisdom . . . (*de op. mundi* 45)[50]

In support of this suggestion of anti-Sophistry in CG I, 3 we have cited parallels from the dialogues of Plato to passages in a document from the second century A.D. This chronological distance is bridged for us by the second Sophistic movement of the same century. The aim of this movement, which affected the whole Greek-speaking world, was to revise the literary glories of the classical period.[51] In this connection the Sophists were studied in the schools. H. I. Marrou notes that these later Sophists

> . . . were not so much interested in the literary side as in the grammar; they were less concerned to recreate the style and taste of the great Athenian writers than to get back to the vocabulary, the morphology, the syntax of classical language . . .[52]

---

50) Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. Loeb Classical Library.

51) G. B. Kerferd, "Sophists," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 7 (New York: The Macmillan Company and The Free Press, 1967), pp. 494 f. See also G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: At the Claren-don Press, 1969), esp. the bibliography, pp. 127-131; Paul Wendland, *Die hellenis-tisch-römische Kultur* (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament I, 2. 2nd and 3rd edition). (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1912), pp. 64-72.

52) *A History of Education in Antiquity.* Translated by George Lamb from the 3rd edition. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965), p. 201.

In this way the Platonic dialogues become relevant material in seeking to understand second century A.D. thought, specifically as it relates to Sophistry.

E. Norden has identified the nature of philosophy within the Greek world view as an orientation towards speculative thought as opposed to the Oriental orientation towards faith. [53]) Philosophy for the Greek is the dialectic which has for its goal the proof, or uncovering, of that which is present already ontologically in man. To the extent that Gnosticism seeks the true nature of the pneumatic self within, it is philosophy. But Greek philosophy stands opposed to revelation which is fundamental to Biblical thought. To this extent Gnosticism, which is based upon the revealed nature of the gnosis, is not philosophy. It is the similarity which brings Gnosticism into a polemical relationship with philosophy.

We now come to the second part of our discussion, the philosopher and philosophy as paradigmatic of existence in this world.

Peel has described five synonymous expressions used by the author of the treatise to characterize this world: 1) *topos*; 2) *kosmos*; 3) *stoicheion*; 4) *systasis*; and 5) *nima*, possibly *epikēros*. On the basis of an examination of the passages in which these terms appear, he makes three observations about the author's world view. First he notes the antithetical nature of the world as it stands in opposition to macrocosmic reality (Pleroma, Aeon). [54]) Secondly, he points to the negative character of this world in the understanding of the author of CG I, 3:

> ... because the 'world' has come into being through a disjuncture in the pre-existent 'Pleroma' (44.36-38), it is viewed in 46.36-38 as being 'small' (= insignificant). Moreover, 'these places' (*nima*) are the locale of faithless philosophers (46.9, 11), and the Elect experience an incomplete existence in them (47.14-15). More significant is the fact that the 'world' is the sphere of the 'flesh' (47.5-6), where old age and corruption are the inevitable fate of all its inhabitants (47.17-26). The 'cosmos' is perishing (45.16-17); it is an illusory place (*phantasia* — 48.13-16, 27-28) marked by transitoriness and (49.2-4). [55])

53) E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos.* 1923. Reprint (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956), pp. 97 f.

54) *Ibid.*, p. 109.

55) Peel, *op. cit.*, pp. 109 f.

Thirdly, Peel understands the author of the treatise to imply that the world has an "almost active evil character." [56]) He bases this understanding on the "association of many 'dominions' and 'deities' with the 'system' of this world (44.37-38)," which seems to give them an evil connotation. Further "divisive teachings of this world seduce and bind the Elect, presumably to existence in this 'cosmos' (49.13-15)." Peel feels this view of the world is made explicit in 49.30-36, "where Rheginos is informed of the need to practise diligently in order to free himself from that 'Element' (*stoicheion*) which seeks to imprison him." [57])

Peel has commented on the "divisive teachings of this world" which tend to seduce the Elect. [58]) From the letters of Ignatius we learn that "division" is the equivalent of "wrong doctrine" and opposite to the "light of truth." [59]) This understanding of "division" by Ignatius corresponds to the way it is used by the author of the treatise, as Peel also has concluded. [60]) Therefore, a second reference to "division" by Ignatius becomes even more interesting, namely that "divisions" are the "beginning of evil." [61]) This would further support Peel's conclusion.

There are two occurrences of *pethau* in CG I, 3 which may be translated "that which is evil" (45.10; 74.22). In 47.22 *pethau* is characterized as "diminution" (*pgōjb*). In 45.9 f. *pethau* is characterized as "dissolution" (*pbōl abal*). In 46.18 f. *pmu* is also characterized by *pbōl abal*). We can conclude that for the author of CG I, 3, *pthau = pmu*.

We can add now two further observations about the author's world view. In 46.36 ff. *kosmos* is characterized not only by *kuei*, but as *pentahbōl abal*. Secondly, we find in 47.22-27 a parallelism:

> *pethau untef mmeu mpgōjb alla un hmat araf*
> *mn laaue sōt mman abal nnima alla ptērf ete anan pe.*

In other words, the favor or grace which is the possibility for salvation is the embodied "All which we are" (*cf.* 46.38 ff.) in the face of "the worse as diminution," an attribute of existence in this world ("these places").

---

56) *Ibid.*, p. 110.
57) *Ibid.*
58) *Ibid.*
59) Ign. Phil. 2.1.
60) Peel, *op. cit.*, p. 96.
61) Ign. Smyr. 7.2.

Thus, we can understand "cosmos" or "world" in CG I, 3 as explicitly characterized by *pethau* ("the worse" or "the evil"); *pgōjb* ("diminution"); *pbōl abal* ("dissolution"); and finally, *pmu* ("death").

Greek philosophy, as it has descended from Plato, seeks an order immanent within this chaotic world. In this tradition, man is understood to be the measure of all things, he is saved by the sole effort of his thought. If the deficiency of the responsive being (in terms of *Nous*, the divine within him) can be perfected, he is then able to discern the immanental divine order (*Logos*). The problem of existence as understood by philosophy then is the deficiency in the responsive being itself, rather than any deficiency inherent in the cosmos. [62]

As we have stated, philosophy is the dialectic which has for its goal the proof, or uncovering, of that which is already present ontologically in man. Philosophy is therefore "religion" in a broader sense, religion in which the sacred is manifest immanently in the cosmos. The philosopher, by the measure of his *Nous*, is able to discern the immanental order of the cosmos (*Logos*). Thus philosophy presupposes a positive or optimistic view of the cosmos, although allowing for *present* intellectual or terrestrial disorder. Learning in this sense becomes the goal or *skopos* for the philosopher in the sense we have defined it above, i.e., one's aim throughout one's whole life.

It is the anti-cosmism of the author of CG I, 3 that places him in a position over against that of philosophy. Faith is valued above persuasion; salvation is not to be sought and found within the present order (including man), but must be given from a hypercosmic source, usually symbolized as divinity. If the cosmos is evil, then the cosmic part of man is also evil. Consequently, he is incapable of extrapolating himself from the influence of the world to comprehend hypercosmic reality (*cf.* CG I, 3: 47.24-26). Man is not able to be saved by self-assertion. He requires for salvation a hypercosmic aid, a divine grace (CG I, 3: 47.22-24).

In CG I, 3: 46.35-38 we read: "Strong is the system of the Pleroma, small is that which broke loose and became world." This cosmological premise is followed by the parallel anthropology of the author: "But

---

62) *Cf.* A.-J. Festugière, "Cadre de la mystique hellénistique," *Aux Sources de la Tradition Chrétienne.* Mélanges offerts à M. Maurice Goguel à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire (Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé S.A., 1950), pp. 74-85.

the All is that which is encompassed. It did not come into being, it was. (46.38-47.1).'' The point to be made is that the All, i.e., the Pleroma, did not come into being, i.e., into the conditions of this existence. It did not, like the cosmos, become, but in fact always was, i.e., is pre-existent and thus eternal. The corresponding understanding of anthropology is that the Pneumatic man, as a result of fall, is the fleshly *embodiment* of the All, and is therefore to be contrasted with the detached world. Thus the author of CG I, 3 speaks of the Pneumatic (i.e., the believer) as being elect ''from the beginning'' (46.25-27). He further exhorts Rheginos ''to practice . . . to be freed from this element (i.e., the world) in order that he might not err, but receive himself again, as he was at first'' (49.31-36).

To rephrase the situation presented by the description of the conditions of this existence, the soteriological problem as presented by the author of CG I, 3 is how to transcend the conditions of this existence, which is characterized by a dualistic metaphysic.

To the extent that the author of CG I, 3 understands the soteriological possibility historically manifest as the embodiment of the All or the Pleroma as the Pneumata, he stands in the tradition of Greek philosophy which grounds the soteriological possibility in the divine part of man, the embodied *Nous*. ''The *Nous* of those who came to know him shall not perish'' (46.23 f.). However, to the extent that man is not able to effect his own salvation (the basic deficiency attributed to philosophy by the author of CG I, 3 in 43.34 f.), but depends on the breaking into this cosmos of the hypercosmic principle, i.e., revelation, the author of CG I, 3 stands in the tradition of the Judeo-Christian (including, to some extent, the Greek mystery cults') understanding of existence. Thus, in the passage just cited (46.23 f.), it is not the *Nous* which shall not perish, but the *Nous* of those *who came to know him (i.e., the Savior)* which shall not perish. It is through revelation, brought into this existence by the Savior which offers the possibility of transcending the present alienated condition.

The Savior is able to establish the ''Way'' (45.22 f.) because of his ''two natures.'' As Son of God, he accomplishes the soteriological function, *within this existence,* of overcoming death (44.14-21 ; 27-29). He is able to be successful in this (whereas the philosophers are not) because the Son of God is also Son of Man who effects the *apokatastasis,* the *cosmological deity* who manifests the necessary hyper-

cosmic principle (44.21-25). The "Savior" in CG I, 3 thus functions as a symbol of transcendence mediating between the reality of "this world" and "that." This is the essence of the argument the author of CG I, 3 has with the philosophers: it is only through the manifestation of the hypercosmic principle within the conditions of this existence that man, characterized by these same conditions of existence, is able to realize the reality of self as the embodied All and therefore be able to transcend his condition.

Over against the dualistic cosmology of the phenomenal, sensory world, the author of CG I, 3 places the "Truth" of that which is within, the embodied All (CG I, 3: 47.26 f.). This embodied All stands in ontological continuity with the Pleroma, the hypercosmic reality. The monistic presupposition requires an *a priori* ontological continuity between fallen *beings* and *Being.* This monistic ontology is the metaphysical presupposition of the author of CG I, 3 for a "realized" soteriological possibility, the spiritual resurrection (45.39-46.2), which Rheginos already has (49.9-36).

THE HIEROPOIOI ON KOS

BY

DAVID R. SMITH
Pomona, California

In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. the hieropoioi were important religious officials in several Greek states, especially in Athens and Delos. The general nature of their title (ἱερὰ ποιεῖν — 'to do something holy') seems to have made the position of hieropoioi an extremely flexible office. At Athens the chief roles of these officials were as commissioners of sacrifice and managers of festivals [1]). On Delos they became the chief religious magistrates of the state [2]). The hieropoioi were important officials on Kos also, but there has never been a scholarly investigation of their role. Accordingly, it is the purpose of this paper to examine the Koan evidence carefully in order to discover what the duties of the hieropoioi were and what their relationship was to other officials and to Koan institutions. The topic naturally divides itself into three parts: the evidence, the relationship to other officials, and the relationship to institutions.

The Evidence

The direct evidence for the activities of the hieropoioi is limited to a small number of inscriptions dating from the mid-fourth century to the second century B.C. These inscriptions are of three general types: inscriptions dealing with the functions of hieropoioi, dedications by the hieropoioi, and an inscription honoring a hieropoios. The first group, consisting of the inscriptions in Rudolf Herzog's *Heilige Gesetze von Kos* [3]), is the most important source of information. In addition to this direct evidence, a number of inscriptions dealing with the government and sacrifices of Kos are helpful in determining the position of hiero-

---

1) Cf. J. Oehler, "Hieropoioi", *R.E.* 8.2.1583-1587.
2) Cf. Th. Homolle, *Les Archives de l'intendance sacrée a Délos (315-166 Av. J.C.)*, Paris, 1887, and W. A. Laidlaw, *A History of Delos*, Oxford, 1933.
3) Abh. Preuss. Akad. 1928, hereafter to be abbreviated as *HGK*.

poioi. Paton and Hicks, *The Inscriptions from Cos* 4), R. Herzog,
Koische Forschungen und Funde 5), and A. Maiuri, *Nuova silloge
epigrafica di Rodi e Cos* 6) are the important publications of these
Koan inscriptions.

The most important inscription for the understanding of the hiero-
poioi on Kos is *HGK* 1 7), both because specific duties of the hieropoioi
were described and because the activities of many other officials were
included in the same inscription. *HGK* 1 is a part of the state calendar
of sacrifices, drawn up at the *synoikismos* of Kos in about 360 B.C.
Three other fragments of the same calendar *(HGK 2-4)*, as well as
regulations for cults of individual gods *(HGK 5-8)*, supplement the
information given in *HGK* 1.

The hieropoioi were closely associated with three other officials in
HGK 1—the priest, the heralds and the *gereaphoros basileon*. Other
important officials mentioned were the hierophylakes, the archeuontes,
and the prostatai. Minor officials were mentioned in the assigning of
shares in the sacrifice.

The chief event of *HGK* 1 is the festival of Zeus Polieus. The priest,
hierophylakes, and archeuontes made a preliminary announcement, and
the hieropoioi and the heralds went out into the chiliasts (or ninths),
drove an ox from each ninth, and mingled the oxen in the agora. The
priest sat at a table wearing the sacred garment with the hieropoioi on
each side of the table. Evidently the hieropoioi cooperated with the
priest in the process of selecting the ox, for a long description of the
selection process follows the prescription for the seating of the priest
and hieropoioi 8).

In addition to the ox chosen for Zeus Polieus, a second ox was
selected for Hestia. The *gereaphoros basileon* performed the sacrifice
to Hestia and sacrificed ἱερά in addition. He received the skin and a
leg as his γέρα; the hieropoioi got a leg, and the rest of the meat be-
longed to the state. The heralds then drove the ox chosen for Zeus
Polieus into the agora. The owner or someone on his behalf stood on

---

4) Oxford, 1891.

5) Leipzig, 1899.

6) Firenze, 1925.

7) Most readily available in C. D. Buck, *The Greek Dialects* 3, Chicago, 1955,
no. 108.

8) *HGK* 1. 1-22. Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von Religiöser Bedeutung*,
17-21, for a discussion of the selection process.

the right side of the ox and proclaimed: 'I furnish this ox to the Koans, let the Koans give the price to Histia'. Immediately the prostatai swore an oath and paid the price and the heralds proclaimed the amount. Unspecified persons drove the ox to the hearth of Histia Hetaireia and performed a sacrifice. The priest garlanded the ox and poured a libation of mixed wine before it. The ox, the burnt offering, seven cakes, honey, and a garland were then brought to the agora. Unspecified persons proclaimed an *euphamia,* tied up the ox, and performed the beginning (κα[τ]άρχονται) of the sacrifice with leaves and laurel branches. A different group (τοὶ δε) offered (καρπῶντι) the piglet and its entrails on the altar and poured a libation of honey mixture over them. They then washed the bowels (ἔντερα) beside the altar and offered them [9]. Since the hieropoioi and heralds are the only two plural subjects available in this part of the inscription, the two groups were probably the hieropoioi and the heralds. The first group was not mentioned by name and there is a lacuna after the τοὶ δε in 1.32 where the name of the second group belongs. Herzog has restored κάρυκες (heralds) in 1.32. The reading should probably stand because the offering of a piglet seems to have been a preliminary purificatory sacrifice (See below), and heralds traditionally took part in preliminary sacrifices. In *HGK* 5.19 the priest of Zeus Polieus was instructed to purify with a piglet before the sacrifice to Zeus Polieus and Athena Polias. Since the situations are similar, it seems logical that the heralds performed a purificatory sacrifice here to mark the opening of an important event. At Athens the herald made the announcement at the beginning of the assembly while a piglet was being sacrified [10]. In *HGK* 1 the herald's announcement of the beginning of the festival of Zeus Polieus immediately after the sacrifice of the piglet supports the idea of the piglet sacrifice as a purificatory sacrifice. If the heralds offered the piglet, then the hieropoioi must have announced the *euphamia,* tied up the ox, and performed the beginning of the sacrifice.

After the offering of the piglet, the priest poured a libation of honey mixture over it. The herald then announced that it was the annual time to celebrate the festival of Zeus Polieus, and the priest offered incense, cakes, and mixed and unmixed libations over the bowels. On the night

9) *HGK* 1. 22-34.
10) Herzog, *HGK,* p. 9, note on line 32, and Ar. *Pl.* 1168.

of the nineteenth of Batromios, the hieropoioi entertained the priests
and the heralds in the public house. At the pouring of the libations
the priests selected one of the hieropoioi to serve as slayer of the ox
chosen for Zeus Polieus and enjoined upon him a taboo from sexual
intercourse for the night. The heralds chose one of their number to
serve as slayer with the same taboo. At the sacrifice to Zeus Polieus
on the twentieth, the priest got the skin and a leg as his share; the
incense-bearer got the tip from the leg which was the share of the
hieropoioi; the heralds and other officials' shares are also specified [11]).

In summary, the hieropoioi had five significant duties in the festival
of Zeus Polieus: (1) Along with the heralds they drove the cattle from
the nine chiliasts. (2) They helped the priest in the selections of the
oxen for Zeus Polieus and Histia. (3) They announced the *euphamia*
and performed the beginning of the sacrifice of the ox. (4) They enter-
tained the priest and heralds on the night of the nineteenth. (5) One
of their number was chosen by the priest as slayer of the ox for Zeus
Polieus.

In *HGK* 1 the hieropoioi were most closely connected with the priest
and the heralds. They were associated with the priest in the selection
of the two oxen, but with the heralds in the driving of the cattle from
the chiliasts and in providing a slayer of the ox. The fact that the
priest chose the slayer from the hieropoioi, while the heralds them-
selves selected a slayer from their own number, indicates a particularly
close relationship between the hieropoioi and the priest.

The fact that the hieropoioi were designated to receive γέρα in the
sacrifice to Histia by the *gereaphoros basileon* probably indicates that
the hieropoioi took part with him in the sacrifice. The association was
apparently similar to that of the hieropoioi and the priest, since sacrifice
was the common duty of the *gereaphoros basileon* and the priest.

The other three sections of the calendar are more fragmentary and,
consequently, reveal less about the hieropoioi. *HGK* 2 prescribed a
sacrifice of an ox chosen in the same way as the ox chosen for Zeus
Polieus [12]). The choosing seems to refer to the process of selection
delineated in HGK 1. The hieropoioi then would have had the jobs of
driving the cattle from the chiliasts, participating with the priest in the
selection, and being associated with the *gereaphoros basileon* in the

---

11) *HGK* 1. 35-54.
12) Lines 10-15.

offering to Histia just as in *HGK* 1. The repetition of the selection process indicates that the process was prevalent on Kos and that the group of officials involved played an important part in Koan state sacrifices.

   HGK 3 describes a sacrifice to all the heroes by tribes. The hieropoioi furnished the ἱερά and performed the sacrifice. The fact that the hieropoioi performed the sacrifice by tribes is evidence that the hieropoioi could be divided into three groups (since there were three tribes), and that the method of selection of hieropoioi was possibly by tribes. Also it seems reasonable that the hieropoioi of this inscription were state hieropoioi since *HGK* 1-4 are fragments of the state calendar of sacrifices, and since no god is specified for any of the hieropoioi in these inscriptions.

   In the sacrifice to the heroes, the hieropoioi actually performed duties normally performed by a priest. The reason the hieropoioi performed the sacrifice may be that there was no priest for the heroes. It is known from the list of taboos for the priest of Zeus Polieus that the priest's contact with hero cults was prohibited (*HGK* 5.8-10).

   In *HGK* 4 a goat was sacrificed to the Charites. According to Herzog's restoration the sacrifice was performed by a priest whom the hieropoioi chose ([θύει δὲ ἱαρεὺς ὅ]γ κα κέλωνται τοὶ ἱεροποιοί). But after the sacrifice the hieropoioi and the priestess took part in the swearing of the ephebes. Since the hieropoioi and the priestess were associated in the second half of the inscription, it is probable that the priestess performed the sacrifice and not a priest chosen by the hieropoioi. Perhaps what the hieropoioi chose was the goat, not the priest. If so, the lacuna in 1.6 may be restored θύει δὲ ἁ ἱέρεα ἅ]γ κα κέλωνται τοὶ ἱεροποιοί with αὐτὴν θύειν understood with κέλωνται. The sentence would then be translated: 'The priestess sacrifices whichever goat the hieropoioi bid her to sacrifice'. After the sacrifice the priestess poured the blood three times toward the altar and the fourth time toward the stone in the olive grove. Unspecified persons divided [...δαιν] ύοντι) the animal into two shares for Thyona, one of meat and one of entrails, and placed them on the altar. The hieropoioi are probably to be understood as the subject of [...δαιν]ύοντι since they are the only plural subjects previously mentioned in the inscription. After the swearing ceremony and the eating of the entrails, the meat,

the ribs, and the skin were completely burnt. The complete burning explains the fact that γέρα were not specified for the sacrifice. The hieropoioi were directed to furnish the ἱερά .

Herzog views *HGK* 4 as the ceremony of the swearing of the ephebes. If this view and the restorations based on it are accepted, the hieropoioi had a part in the swearing of the ephebes just as they had in swearing ceremonies at Mykale [13]) and Tamyna [14]). On Kos the duty of the hieropoioi was to select the animal for sacrifice, to divide the flesh and entrails into shares for Thyona and Asia, to burn completely the meat, ribs, and skin, and to furnish the ἱερά. Noteworthy, also, is the close cooperation of the hieropoioi with the priestess.

HGK 5 is a fragment of the regulations for the cult of Zeus Polieus. One regulation specified that at the sacrifice to Zeus Polieus the priest host the monarchos, the hieropoioi, and the heralds [15]). The three examples of entertaining (*HGK* 1; 5; and 8) point to a close connection between these officials.

The hieropoioi probably also appeared in *HGK* 15 where, according to Herzog's restoration, they received money from the tamiai to purchase two oxen for Asklapios and Apollo and two cows for Hygieia and Epione for the procession. Since the oxen for Asklapios and Apollo were the best available, and the cows for Hygieia and Epione cost no less than 300 Dr. each, it appears that the hieropoioi selected the victims on the basis of quality. This role is similar to the role of the hieropoioi described in *HGK* 1 and 3.

Maiuri Nuova silloge 441 contains ritual directions for the priest.of Nike The hieropoioi appear only in the specification that the priest conduct the festival along with the monarchos, hieropoioi, and victors in the crown contests. The rest of the inscription concentrates on the regulations for the life of the priest.

The dedications by the hieropoioi are the second important source of information about the hieropoioi on Kos. There are three dedicatory inscriptions made by a priest and hieropoioi of a particular god. *Inscr. Cos* 370 is a dedication to Hekate Stratia by Kleusthenes the son Hieron, the priest of Apollo, and five hieropoioi. The names of the individuals indicate that the priest and hieropoioi were all of the same

---

13) F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure*, 39; *Inscr. Prien.* 362.
14) *IG* 12. 9. 90.
15) *HGK* 5. 26-27.

family and thus that all the cult personnel probably served Apollo [16]).
Another dedication to Hekate Stratia by the priest Hekataios son of
Hekatodoros and six hieropoioi was probably also a case of familial
priesthood to one goddess: the names of the priest Hekataios and his
father are formed from the name of Hekate [17]). The third dedication
is probably a dedication by a priest and hieropoioi, but it is too frag-
mentary to be helpful [18]).

Inscr. Cos 406 is a dedication of an altar by a monarchos and eight
hieropoioi to Asklapios and Hygieia. The monarchos was probably a
deme official in this case, since the Isthmian deme where the inscription
was found is known to have had a monarchos [19]). Also interesting is
the fact that the eight hieropoioi seem to have been members of the
same family [20]).

In another deme inscription honoring the hierotamiai (*Inscr. Cos*
383), a priest and hieropoioi are said to have performed the sacrifices
according to the sacred instructions. The hierotamiai were honored for
investing well the money paid by the state to the deme and for using
their own funds to help meet the expenses of the sacrifices and enter-
tainment of the demesmen. Evidently the entertainment and the sacri-
fices were connected events, similar to the entertainment at the feast
of Zeus Polieus in *HGK* 1. The inscription concentrates on the
honoring of the hierotamiai, so it is impossible to determine anything
more definite about the hieropoioi.

The third type of inscription consists of a single honorary citation on
a statue. The honorand had served the state well as gymnasiarch and as
a hieropoios [21]).

Other Officials

As we have seen in the discussion of the evidence, the official with
whom the hieropoioi were most often associated was the priest. The

---

16) The names of the individuals were interlocking.
17) *Inscr. Cos* 388.
18) *Inscr. Cos* 56.
19) *Inscr. Cos* 406 note.
20) The names were interlocking. Hekatodoros was monarchos, the hieropoioi
were Timoxenos son of Timoxenos, Lukaithos son of Diophantos, Theudoridas
son of Melanthos, Melankridas son of Melanthos, Hekatodoros son of Kleagoros,
Aristippidas son of Timagoras, Melanthos son of Timoxenos, Kallikrates son of
Timagoras.
21) *Inscr. Cos* 107.

two positions were closely connected and complementary. At the sacrifice to all the heroes the hieropoioi actually became the sacrificers, probably because the chthonic nature of hero cults prevented a priest from coming into contact with heroes. In other sacrifices, the priest usually played the primary role, with the hieropoioi as assistants. Other duties that the two officials had in common were the furnishing of ἱερά on various occasions and the entertainment of other officials. The entertaining of other officials seems to have been paralleled by an entertainment of the citizen-body by demes. That is, there was a definite separation between the participants in the festival (priest, monarchos, heralds, hieropoioi) and the rest of the population. It is interesting that the only known hosts of the other officials were the hieropoioi and priests, the two groups of officials most closely connected with sacrifice.

The main difference between the office of the priest and the hieropoioi seems to be the close connection of the priest with a god. The priest is always singular even when his god is not mentioned, and the name of his god can usually be surmised from context. The dedication of the priest to the god also explains the limitations on his behavior, regulations on wearing apparel, and his share in the god's revenue. Although the hieropoioi were sometimes servants of a particular god (as we have seen in the discussion of the evidence), they were not necessarily the representatives of the god. Where the unit is known for the appointment of hieropoioi, it was governmental rather than divine. The hieropoioi shared in the γέρα of sacrifices and sometimes had the financial obligation of furnishing ἱερά, but they never received a share of the god's revenue. There was only one known taboo on the hieropoioi, and that taboo was placed only on the one hieropoios chosen by the priest to be a slayer of the ox to Zeus Polieus. The probable explanation is that the hieropoios was assuming the role of the priest in that he was actually slaying the ox.

Another official connected with the hieropoioi was the monarchos. The monarchos as the eponymous official of Kos evidently had religious duties to perform. He often took part in the festivals and was entertained by a priest or hieropoioi. The exact nature of the monarchos' religious duties was never explicitly stated, but it seems logical that he represented the state at the festivals. The dedication of the altar by an Isthmian deme monarchos and hieropoioi suggests that in

this case the monarchos was the leader in performing the deme sacri-
fices. That is, the monarchos was apparently performing a priestly
role, with the hieropoioi as his assistants.

In *HGK* 1 two other officials cooperated with the hieropoioi, the
gereaphoros basileon and the heralds. The *gereaphoros basileon* per-
formed the sacrifice of the ox to Hestia, apparently aided by the
hieropoioi. This seems to be another case of a magistrate's performing
a priestly function. The heralds aided the hieropoioi in the more
menial ritual tasks.

Institutions

The institutions with which the hieropoioi were connected are an
important part of understanding their position on Kos. The dedicatory
inscriptions in which the god was specified indicate that some hiero-
poioi were connected with the service of a particular god. In one
inscription the hieropoioi appeared as deme officials. On the basis of
the interpretation of *HGK* 3 given above and the single honorary
inscription, it is possible to conclude that there were also hieropoioi in
the service of the state, and that these state hieropoioi played an im-
portant role in the religious ceremonies of the state. In short, the
situation of the hieropoioi on Kos was similar to the situation in Athens
in that various institutions—the state, the demes, the temples—had
hieropoioi. The office of hieropoioi seems to have been a 'universal',
useful in all institutions of religious service.

Conclusion

There are two general descriptions of the work of the hieropoioi,
which summarize the position of the hieropoioi on Kos and explain
the peculiar nature of that position. In two of the inscriptions we have
discussed, the words συμπομπεύειν ('conduct together') and συντελεῖν
('sacrifice together') describe the functions of the hieropoioi and
associated officials (Maiuri *Nuova silloge* 441 and *Inscr. Cos* 383).
Συμπομπεύειν and συντελεῖν are adequate descriptions of almost all
of the known activities of the hieropoioi. That is, in general the hiero-
poioi shared in performing sacrifices and holding festivals. The specific
duties of the hieropoioi indicate that their role was almost always sub-
ordinate to the priest's. The priest was in charge of the sacrifice and

hieropoioi drove the cattle, divided up the meat, selected and bought the victims.

In conclusion, Kos made a peculiar adaptation in the office of the hieropoioi by consistently associating them with and subordinating them to a priest. This adaptation is foreign to the Athenian custom of casting hieropoioi in a managing role and the development at Delos where the hieropoioi became the chief religious officials of the state. On the other hand, the relation of the hieropoioi to the Koan institutions seems to have been very similar to the practices elsewhere: hieropoioi were connected with almost every type of institution which dealt with religious matters.

THE NATURE OF THE PATRIARCHAL GOD "EL SADDAY"

BY

E. L. ABEL

North Carolina, U.S.A.

That Yahweh was not the god of the Israelites until the Mosaic age is attested by Israel's own ancient traditions (Ex. 6.3) and by the fact that Yahweh does not appear as a theophoric element in Hebrew proper names before the time of Moses. Instead of Yahweh, the tradition (P) states that the name of the pre-Mosaic god of Israel was El šadday (Ex. 6.3) and refers to him as "the god of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3.6).

Several years ago, biblical scholars were rather divided in their opinions as to whether or not the element *el* was an appelative for the word "god" [1]) or rather a proper name. [2]) With the discovery of the mythological texts from Ugarit, however, it became clear that El was indeed a proper name, at least at Ugarit, where he was referred to as the head of the pantheon of that Canaanite city, and following H. Gunkel [3]), several scholars [4]) have contended that the El of the ancient Israelites was actually appropriated from the Canaanites.

However, even though this Canaanite deity may actually have been identical with the god worshipped by the patriarchs, this does not necessarily mean that the patriarchs came to worship El only after

---

1) For the many variants of El in the Semitic languages, see A. Murtonen, *Stud. Orient.* 1952, *18*, 24f.; and M. H. Pope *El In The Ugaritic Texts,* Leiden, 1955, p. 6f.

2) For an exhaustive review and discussion of this problem, see Pope, *op. cit.* p. 1f.

3) *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt,* Göttingen, 1910.

4) E.g., A. Alt, Der Gott der Väter, Leipzig, 1929, E.T. in *Essays On Old Testament History and Religion,* Oxford, 1966, p. 22. (References are to this English edition): O. Eissfeldt, *J.S.S.* 1956, *1*, 25-37; F. M. Cross, *H.T.R.* 1962, *55,* 225-259.

their settlement in Canaan, as contended by Eissfeldt. [5]) L. R. Bai-
ley [6]) has argued against this hypothesis for several reasons, one of
which is that šadday has not been found as an epithet for El in the
Ugaritic material. In contrast to Eissfeldt, Bailey suggests that Israel's
worship of El began prior to their arrival in Canaan, and additionally,
that El Šadday more closely resembles the Mesopotamian deity, Bêl
Šadê than he does the Canaanite El. Since Bêl Šadê is also found as
an epithet for ᵈAmurru, [7]) the chief god of the Amorites, this would
imply that El Šadday was originally an Amorite god, following the
equation of El Šadday = Bêl Šadê = ᵈAmurru. [8])

Should the identification of El Šadday as a pre-Canaanite Amorite
deity be substantiated, it would be a decided step forward in deter-
mining the ultimate identity and character of this god and in turn,
this would shed additional light on the nature of patriarchal religion.
However, as noted by J. Ouellette, [9]) Bailey's evidence for the iden-
tification of El Šadday is not overwhelming. Nevertheless, since I am
basically in agreement with Bailey's hypothesis, especially as concerns
the lunar character of this god, I direct the following remarks as
evidence in support of Bailey's hypotheses.

According to I. J. Gelb [10]), the god Il (= later El) is mentioned
in the cuneiform texts as early as 2500 B.C., a full 1000 years before
the date of the Ugaritic source material. The identity between Il and
El is evident from a comparison of Akkadian and Amorite theophoric
names. For instance, *dad-um-pi-il-um*, "favourite is the word of Il",
= *dad-um-pi-el*, "favourite is the word of El"; *nuh-i-il-um*, "Il is my
rest", = *nuh-i-el*, "El is my rest"; and *ab-um-il-um*, "Il is father",
= *ab-um-el*, "El is father", to cite only a few examples. [11]) It is thus

---

5) *Op. cit.*

6) *J.B.L.* 1968, *87*, 434-438. Cf. also A. Parrot, *Abraham And His Times,* Phil.
1968, p. 112.

7) Cf. J.-R. Kupper, *L'iconographie du dieu Amurru dans la glyptique de la
I*ʳᵉ *dynastie Babylonienne,* 62-68.

8) A comparable statement to the effect that El was an Amorite god was made
almost fifty years ago by A. T. Clay, *The Origin of Biblical Traditions,* New
Haven, 1923, p. 99-102.

9) *J.B.L.* 1969, *88*, 470-471.

10) *Old Akkadian Writing and Grammar* (Materials for the Assyrian Dic-
tionary, No. 2) Chicago, 1961, p. 6f.

11) G. Buccellati, *The Amorities Of The Ur III Period,* Naples, 1966, p. 129,
139, 176.

apparent that El was a leading deity among the Semites of Mesopotamia long before they entered Canaan. [12])

Now around the time of Sargon of Akkad (2371-2316 B.C.), a group of nomadic people known as the Amurru ("Westerners") in Akkadian began infiltrating into northern Mesopotamia from the semi-arid fringes of the Fertile Cescent. At first this invasion was gradual and peaceful, but by the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur (2113-2004 B.C.), these people became increasingly warlike and they began to attack and occasionally to destroy some of the towns of the settled peoples of northern Mesopotamia. [13]) At about the same time period, archeological evidence from Palestine [14]) attests to the arrival of a similar group of nomads who likewise disrupted urban civilization in this country. [15]) Although there is no written information regarding this Palestinian invasion which is comparable to the written material from northern Mesopotamia, the coincidence in time, the nomadic character of the invaders, and the nature of their destructive activities, suggest that the people who invaded Mesopotamia and those who invaded Palestine were of common origin and background.

What relation do these ethnic movements have for the history of the patriarchs? For one thing, the invasion of these Amurru or Amorites as they are called in the Old Testament is roughly coincidental with the supposed migration of Abram and his family from Mesopotamia. [16]) Moreover, the patriarchs were also nomads whose activities were sometimes of a warlike nature (cf. Gen. 14), not much different from those of the Habiru. [17]) If becoming Habiru, means becoming rebellious in the sense of defying authority, as suggested by Camp-

---

12) Cf. M. J. Dahood, Ancient Semitic Deities In Syria and Palestine, in *Le Antiche Divinità*, ed. by S. Moscati, Rome, 1958.

13) Cf. Buccelllatti, *op. cit.* p. 91.

14) See K. Kenyon, *Amorites And Canaanites,* London, 1966; Kenyon, *Archeology In The Holy Land,* N.Y. 1971; cf. I. J. Gelb, *J.C.S.* 1961, *15,* 27-47.

15) Kenyon, *Holy Land,* p. 135f.

16) For the chronology of the patriarchs, see H. H. Rowlley, *From Joseph To Joshua,* London, 1950, p. 57f.; Rowley, Recent Discovery And The Patriarchal Age, in *The Servant Of The Lord,* London, 1952, p. 279f; D. N. Freedman, The Chronology of Israel and the Ancient Near East, in, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East,* ed. by G. E. Wright, N.Y., 1961.

17) Material dealing with the Habiru is covered by J. Bottero, *Le Problème des Habiru,* 1954; and M. Greenberg, *The Hab/piru,* New Haven, 1955.

bell, [18]) then this would indicate that Abram fit in quite well with the Amorites of this period whose activities clearly resemble those of the Habiru. [19]) In this regard, it is interesting to note that when Abram went to war, his allies were Amorites (Gen. 14.13, 24) and that the ruler of Shechem, an Amorite city in the time of Abram (Gen. 48.22), is said to have abandoned his community and to have gone over to the Habiru. [20]) Furthermore, in the Israelite traditions, it is said that when Abram first entered Canaan, he made straight for the city of Shechem and worshipped there (Gen. 12.6), apparently at an Amorite sanctuary since the city was in Amorite hands at the time (cf. Gen. 48.22). Finally, besides the fact that a number of Israelites bore names of Amorite background, [21]) it is most significant that the Israelites themselves regarded the Amorites as their ancestors: "your father was an Amorite", declared Ezekiel (Ezek. 16.3).

This Amorite invasion which took place around 2300-2000 B.C. was eventually followed by a second major invasion which reached its height around 1900 B.C. From the archeological evidence, it appears that this too was a movement of Amorites. But instead of pursuing a nomadic way of life, this latter group of Amorites tended to be predominantly agriculturists and urban dwellers.

According to K. Kenyon's reconstruction of this period, [23]) the origins of this new movement are to be found in the area of Byblus in Syria in a land known as Kinahna. [24]) From here, the movement spread out along the coast of Syria and into the land of Palestine, extending eventually from Ugarit in the north to the Negev in the south. These Amorites who settled mainly along the coast or in the lowlands of the interior were called Canaanites, whereas those among the descendants of the first wave of Amorites who continued to inhabit the highlands and mountains of Palestine retained the name of Amorite (cf. Num. 13.29; Dt. 17.20; Josh. 5.1, 10.6, 11.3). [25])

---

18) E. F. Campbell, *B.A.* 1960, *23*, 2-22; cf. G. E. Mendenhall,*ibid.* 1962, *25*, 66-87.
19) Cf. Buccellatti, *op. cit.* p. 91.
20) Amarna Letters, No. 289, in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts,* (A.N.E.T.), ed. by J. B. Pritchard, Princeton, 1950, p. 489.
21) W. F. Albright, *From The Stone Age To Christianity* (FSAC), Baltimore, 1946, p. 180.
23) *Amorites and Canaanites.*
24) *Ibid.* p. 53f. Cf. Albright, *B.A.S.O.R.,* 1939, *73,* p. 10.
25) Cf. Kenyon, *Amorites,* p. 53f.

It is in light of these two distinct Amoritic movements that the conflict between Baᶜal Hadad and El in the Ugaritic texts, [26]) and Baᶜal Hadad and Yahweh (= El) in the Old Testament [27]) is to be understood. From the Ugaritic material, it is evident that El was the unchallenged head of the Ugaritic pantheon until the appearance of Baᶜal Hadad, who successfully wrested from him the position of leadership. Since Baᶜal Hadad is not the son of El, but of Dagan, [28]) the conflict between these two gods can rightly be seen as a conflict between two pantheons, one headed by the venerable god El, the other by the younger Baᶜal Hadad. [29]) In accord with the historical evidence, it is reasonable to regard El as the god of the nomadic Amorites and the nomadic patriarchs, whereas Baᶜal Hadad is the god of the agricultural and urban Amorites known as the Canaanites. [30])

A further indication that the contest between these two gods is related to the above mentioned ethnic movements is detectable from a comparison of the Amorite personal names found in the Egyptian Execration Texts. In those which date from around 2000 B.C. [31]), the god Hadad is completely absent in the list of personal names, whereas in the second list which dates from around 1800 B.C., [32]) personal names containing this theophoric element are rather common [33]) Since the names of all the Palestinian princes mentioned

---

26) See U. Oldenburg, *The Conflict Between El and Baᶜal In Canaanite Religion,* Leiden, 1969.

27) Eissfeldt, *op. cit.*

28) C. H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Manual* (UM), Rome, 1955, 49: I. 24; 62.6. Dagan was an agricultural deity whose existence is attested as early as the time of Sargon of Akkad. One of his cultic centres was the city of Tutul (modern Hit), located on the Upper Euprhrates (cf. Oldenburg, *op. cit.* p. 48f).

29) D. Nielsen, *Ras Shamra Mythologie und Biblische Theologie,* Leipzig, 1936, p. 108, came to a similar conclusion from the fact that in the Ugaritic textst Asherah shows no sign of grief over the death of Baᶜal, suggesting that Baᶜal was not one of her own offspring (cf. UM 49: I. 12f.).

30) Cf. Albright, *FSAC,* p. 119; Oldenburg, *op. cit.,* p. 152.

31) See K. Sethe, *Die Ächtung feindlicher Fürsten, Völker und Dinge auf altägyptischen Tongefässscherben des Mittleren Reiches,* Berlin, 1926.

32) M. G. Posener, *Princes et pays d'Asie et de Nubie,* Brussels, 1940.

33) Among the deities mentioned in the pantheon lists from Mari, the name of Hadad does not specificallly appear until the Old Babylonian Period, although Dagan is recorded as early as the time of Sargon (see D. O. Edzard, Pantheon Und Kult In Mari, in *La Civilization De Mari,* ed. by J.-R. Kuppers.

in these texts are Amoritic [34]), these imprecatory inscriptions lend rather impressive corroboration both to the historical analysis and to the hypothesis of a transition in power from El to the pantheon of Hadad which followed the rise to power of the Canaanites. Similarly, an analysis of Amoritic personal names from Mesopotamia reveals that those dating from the Ur III period are typically characterized by the frequency with which they contain the divine element, Il or El, whereas in those dating from the Old Babylonian period, the divine element Hadad or Dagan tends to be predominant. [35])

In the Old Testament, it is Yahweh rather than El who is opposed to Baʿal. But in so far as the Israelites explicitly identified Yahweh with El (e.g. Isa. 43.12; 45.22), the Yahweh-Baʿal confrontation may reflect a later Israelite version of the El-Baʿal struggle described in the Ugaritic texts. Since the Israelites were able to maintain their sense of continuity between themselves and their patriarchal fore-bearers, they never abandoned their loyalty to El-Yahweh. Conse-quently, while Baalism did make gains among many Israelites, it never became powerful enough to supplant the older religion. Rather than accepting the native Baʿal of the Canaanites when they felt the need for a deity with specific ability to ensure fertility, they bestowed such powers upon Yahweh whose origins, are unfortunately still quite enigmatic.

However, if we can reasonably assume that El was indeed the god of both the nomadic Amorites and the patriarchs, it may still be pos-sible to determine the nature of this god from an analysis of his personal attributes and by seeking identities between the members of El's family and the family of gods whose character is better known than is El's. But this approach has certain shortcomings from its very beginning since there are no known epithets for El or Il in any of the Semitic languages except that found at Ugarit and in the Old Testament. [36]) Nevertheless, there is some worthwhile information to be gained. From Ugarit, we have the folllowing epithets; *mlk* ("king"), *tr* ("bull"), *ab* ("father"), *ab adm* ("father of mankind"),

---

34) A. Goetz, *B.A.S.O.R.*, 1958, *151*, p. 28.

35) Cf. Buccellati, *op. cit.*; H. B. Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names In the Mari Texts*, Baltimore, 1965.

36) Muratonen, *op. cit.* p. 31.

ab snm ("father of years"), *bny bnwt* ("creator of creation"), *dpid* (and *ltpn* ("merciful" and "compassionate"). [37])

These few epithets indicate that El was regarded as both the senior member and the titular head of the pantheon at Ugarit. His epithet "bull" indicates that he was also invested with powers of fertility, since the bull was a common symbol of fecundity in the Near East. Related to this notion of fertility is El's other epithet, "creator of creation", while "merciful" and "compassionate" are personal attributes of this venerable god. Physically, he appears as heavily bearded [38]) and wearing a long robe and a crown with horns, on a stele dating from around the fourteenth century B.C. [39])

As members of his family, we have Asherah as his wife, who is callled "Creatress of the Gods" [40]) and his sons Yamm, the god of the sea, [41]) and Mot, the god of the underworld. [42]) Another of El's offspring is an androgynous deity called both A*t*tr, "the Morning Star", and A*t*trt, "the Evening Star" [43]). However, Asherah later became the consort of Hadad (cf. Isa. 57.6-8) which may account for the animosity directed against her in the Old Testament (e.g. *Dt.* 12.2-3; 2 K. 23.6 f; Isa. 57.8).

The Near Eastern deity whose epithets and family come closest to that of this Ugaritic god El is the moon god known as Nannar to the Sumerians, Sin to the Babylonians and Wadd to the Arabians. [44]) For example, in the bilingual Sumerian and Akkadian Hymn to the moon god [45]), Nannar, like El, is addressed as "Bull" and "Father". Like El the moon god is the "creator of creation" and "father of mankind". He is "father begetter of gods and men" and is heralded as "womb that gives birth to everything". He too is called "merciful" and while he is not explicitly described as "compassionate", the moon

---

37) UM 49: I. 8, 21-22; 49: III. 5, 10, 11, 14; 49; IV. 34; 49: VI. 26-27; 51: II. 11; 51: III. 31, 32; 51: IV. 24; Krt. 37, 151.
38) Cf. UM 51: V. 65-67.
39) See F. A. Schaeffer, *The Cuneiform Texts Of Ras Shamra-Ugarit,* London, 1939, p. 60, Pl. xxxi.
40) Um 51: I. 23.
41) Um 68. 6-7.
42) Um 67: I. 6-8.
43) Um 49: I. 17-18. cf. Um 52.
44) Cf. D. Nielsen, *op. cit.* p. 9f.
45) *A.N.E.T.* p. 385-6.

god is the "mighty prince whose deep heart no one of the gods comprehends". Thus, on a straightforward comparison of attributes and epithets, El and the moon god are quite interchangeable.

Further evidence for the identity of these two deities comes from a comparison of their respective families. For example, in the Qatabanian texts from South Arabia, [46]) Asherah appears as the consort of the moon gods, Wadd and Amm, while in an inscription from Tema in northern Arabia, [47]) she is mentioned in connection with the moon god Sin-gala. While there is little evidence that the moon god had any offspring comparable to Yamm or Mot, Aṭtr and Aṭtrt, the Morning and Evening Stars, have a counterpart in the androgynous Ishtar, who is called the daughter of the Moon god, Sin. [48]) Finally, mention should be made of Shapash, the sun goddess at Ugarit. Although she is regarded as a divinity associated with Baᶜal Hadad, Shapash is also reckoned as one of El's offspring. [49]) This in turn suggests the identity of El since Shapash is a variant of Shamash, the name of the Mesopotamian sun god, and Shamash is explicitly addressed as the son of the moon god Sin. [50]) Although Shamash is a masculine god in Mesopotamia, this was not always the case since there are theophoric names in Akkadian which hail the god Šamaš as mother: *Um-mi-(il) Šamaš*, "Šamaš is my mother". [51]) Thus, besides sharing some of the same epithets and attributes, El and the moon god are married to the same goddess and they are father of the same deities. As a further point of identity, it may also be noted that like El, Sin wears a "luxurious" beard, and "garments of princeliness" [52]) and is typically symbolized by either a pair of horns or a crescent in the iconography of the Near East. [53])

Against the identification of El as a lunar deity, Pope [54]) has argued that El's residence in the netherworld precludes such an hypo-

---

46) J. B. Pritchard, *Palestinian Figurines,* New Haven, 1943, p. 63f.

47) *Ibid.* p. 64.

48) *A.N.E.T.* p. 384.

49) UM 49: IV. 30-35. Cf. 'nt: III. 43.

50) *A.N.E.T.* p. 386, 387.

51) Gelb, Sargonic Texts, p. 225.

52) *A.N.E.T.* p. 385.

53) Cf. M. Jastrow, *Aspects Of Religious Belief And Practice In Babylonia And Assyria,* N.Y. 1911, p. 113f.

54) *Op. cit.* p. 84.

thesis. However, El's abode was not originally the netherworld but
Mount Sapan. It was only after Baᶜal's rise to prominence that El
was banished to the underground. [55]) Consequently, Pope's objection
to the identification of El as lunar deity is not really acceptable.

Regarding the identity and nature of the patriarchal god El, there
is much less information to go on in the Old Testtament compared with
the Ugaritic material. However, a tentative solution can be proppossed
on the basis of El's epithets, his similarity to the Ugaritic El, and the
onomastic evidence derived from the Bible.

Alt's arguments in support of an anonymous "god of the fathers" [56])
may be dismissed summarily since the evidence upon which he bases
his thesis is much later than the period of the patriarchs and in fact,
this "god of the fathers" was occasionally identified. [57]) If then El
is indeed the name of the god of the patriarchs, we may proceed to an
examination of his main epithets in the Old Testament, viz. *olam*
("eternal"), *elyon* ("most high"), and *šadday* ("mountain"). [58]) These
epithets have been subjected to a thorough examination recently by
Cross [59]) who concluded that these various cult names, with the ex-
ception of *šadday*, were derived from the Canaanites. With respect to
šadday, Cross still held out the possibility that this was originally the
name of an old Amorite deity whom the patriarchs identified with the
Canaanite god, El.

On the assumption that *šadday* is a variant of the Akkadian, *šadû*
("mountain"), [60]) Bailey [61]) has sought to identify El šadday with
Bêl Šadê, a leading Amorite deity. In addition, he contends that Bêl

---

55) UM 'nt: III. 25-28, IV. 62-64. Cf. UM 51: IV. 50-57; 'nt: V. 46-51.
See also UM 75: I. 12-41 wherein one of Asherah's servants who is made
pregnant by El is explicitly called, "Maid of the Moon God", thus possibly
identifying El as a lunar deity (cf. J. Gray, *The Legacy Of Canaan*, Leiden,
1957, p. 64.).

56) *Op. cit.*

57) J. Lewy, *R.H.R.*, 1934, *110*, 29-65. Regarding the identification of personal
gods, note the following statements: "may Sin, my own god, forever be the evil
spirit that brings misfortune", and "Adad, the god of my city, and Sin, my own
god", in *The Assyrian Dictionary*, ed. by I. J. Gelb et al., Chicago, 1960, Vol. 7,
sub. *ilu*.

58) Gen. 14.18; 17.1; 21.33 etc.

59) *Op. cit.*

60) Cf. Albright, *J.B.L.* 1935, *56*, 173-193; Cross, *op. cit.*; and H. G. May,
J.B.L., 1941, *60*, 122.

61) *Op. cit.*

Šadê was a lunar god identical to the god Sin. This hypothesis is based on the fact that the Amorites concluded treaties in Sin's temple in Mari; that the Amorite god, Amurru, is portrayed standing under a lunar crescent on various cyllinder seals; that Amurru's sacred staff is found in a seal dealing with a scene involving the cult of Sin; that several devotees of the god Amurru have Sin as a theophoric element in their personal names; and finally, that *Yarah,* the West Semitic name for the moon god, can be detected in the name of the Armoritic tribe, the *Banu-yamina.* To these arguments we may add the theophoric names, *Bel-Harran-šadua,* "the lord of Harran (i.e. Sin) is my mountain", *Sin-šaduni,* "Sin is our mountain", [62]) and *Šadday-or* (Num. 1.6), "Sadday shines", all of which demonstrate that Sin was called by the name of *šadday* and that *šadday* was also the epithet of a stellar deity.

A second line of evidence, but one which has been previously followed half-heartedly, is to examine some of the personal names of the patriarchs and their families for some connection with the moon cult.

First, however, let us note that despite the tradition naming Ur of the Chaldees as the patriarchal home, it is the city of Harran which is most closely connected with Abram and his family. [63]) This itself is an important fact since Harran was renown as one of the main centres for the cult of the moon god, Sin. [64]) Now although the Old Testament portrays Abram as a follower of the true god from the very beginning, it is not without significance that in the non-cannonical traditions, he is more often depicted as a convert from idolatry and especially from the practice of astrology. [65]) This tradition is significant in the present context since astrology was intimately linked with the observation and worship of the moon in the Near East. [66]) Thus, at the outset, there are at least two facts which suggest the possibility of moon worship by the patriarch. [67])

With respect to be members of Abram's family, it has long been

---

[62]) F. Hommel, *The Ancient Hebrew Tradition,* London, 1897, p. 110, 116f.

[63]) Cf. J. Skinner, *Genesis,* N.Y. 1910, p. 237f.

[64]) See the brief review of Harran's history by S. Lloyd and W. Brice, *Anatol. Stud.,* 1951, *I,* p. 77.

[65]) Cf. G. Vermes', *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism,* Leiden, 1961, p. 85f.

[66]) Jastrow, *op. cit.* p. 112f.

[67]) Cf. R. T.O'Callaghan, *Aram Naharaim,* Rome, 1948, p. 123.

recognized that the personal names of some of these individuals contain traces of the ancient lunar cult. For example, the name of Abram's wife, Sarai ("princess"), and that of his sister-in-law, Milcha ("queen"), bear striking resemblance to Sharratu and Mal-katu, titles of Sin's wife and daughter. [68]) Similarly, the name of Laban, the grandson of Nahor, Abram's brother, literally translated means, "the white blanching (of the moon)" (cf. 24.23; 30.26) which has suggested to several scholars [69]) that the name is taken from the cult of the moon god Sin.

The name of Abram's father, Terah, likewise bears an unmis-takeable reference to *yareah,* the Hebrew word for moon (cf. Josh. 10.13). Furthermore, it is almost identical to Ter, a name by which the moon god was addressed in Harran, [70]) and to *yrh,* a term denoting the moon, moon god, and month at Ugarit. [71]) Finally, we may note that Abram's own name which roughly translated means "Father on high", may also bear some trace of the moon cult since at the time of the patriarchs, the title "father" was most appropriately applied to Sin, the "Father of the Gods". [72])

It would appear, then, that these theophoric names also offer evi-dence for the possibility that the patriarchs were worshippers of the moon while they lived in Mesopotamia. That their descendants also participated in this cult in the land of Canaan is clearly evident from the allusions to moon worship in Dt. 4.19, 17.3; 2 K 23.5; and Jer. 8.2. [73])

In summary, the similarity between the attributes and family of Ugaritic El and the lunar deities, the resemblance between the patri-

---

68) J. Skinner, *op. cit.* p. 237, cf. also, R. Dhorme, *R.B.* 1928, *37,* 511f.; 1931, *40*, p. 364f.

69) E.g. J. Lewy, *H.U.C.A.,* 1945-6, *19,* p. 442, n. 173; Dhorme, *op. cit.* p. 511f.; A. Jeremias, *The Old Testament In The Light Of The Near East,* N.Y., 1941, p. 18.

70) Lewy, *op. cit.* p. 425f.

71) Cf. L. I. J. Studelmann, *The Hebrew Conception Of The World,* Rome, 1970, p. 78.

72) Cf. *A.N.E.T.* p. 385. Cf. also the popularity of such names as *Sin-a-bu-um,* "Sin is father", *Sin-a-bu-shu,* "Sin is his father", and *A-bi-a-ra-ah,* "My father is the moon", (H. Ranke, *Early Babylonian Personal Names,* Phil., 1905, p. 58, 152).

73) Note also that in Gen. 49.24, *J* refers to the god of Jacob as אביר, i.e., "bull" one of the moon god's epithets.

archal El šadday and the Amorite Bêl Šadê who in turn bears a resem-
blance to the moon god Sin, the contemporary affinities between the
patriarchs and the nomadic Amorites, the location of the patriarchal
homeland in the very center of the moon cult in the Near East, the
definite allusions to the moon cult in the names of the patriarchs and
their families, and the affinities between the Ugaritic El and the patri-
archal god, all suggest that El Šadday, the god of the patriarchs was
a lunar deity and in turn that the patriarchs were followers of the
moon cult.

SYMBOLISM OF "DESCENT" IN TIBETAN SACRED KINGSHIP AND SOME EAST ASIAN PARALLELS*)

BY

MANABU WAIDA

Halifax, Canada.

The problem of sacred kingship in ancient Tibet is one of the most interesting and important subjects presented by the history of Tibetan religions. This particular problem of sacred kingship has been the object of serious study by Professor Giuseppe Tucci who explores the problem from a perspective of the history of religions. One of the most noteworthy contributions Tucci has made is that he has pointed out the essential difference which exists between the royal ideology of ancient Tibet and that of ancient India. He has strongly suggested that the Tibetan royal ideology owes much to the religious tradition of the pastoral Turco-Mongolian peoples.

For some time I have been engaged in collecting, comparing and analyzing the foundation myths as they are found in Japan, Korea and Tibet, and I am struck by the tremendous similarities between the three traditions. I understand a foundation myth is the one which tells how a dynasty, a nation, or a kingdom was founded at the beginning of mythical time. I am inclined to hold that not only the Tibetan foundation myth but also those of Japan and Korea might belong essentially to the mythological tradition of the pastoral peoples of Central and North Asia.

Tibetan Symbolism of Descent

The sacred nature of the kings of ancient Tibet is closely related with the belief that the first mythical king descended from heaven to

the summit of the mountain by means of a rope or a ladder *in illo tempore.*

To be more concrete, according to the pre-Buddhist (Bon) traditions which are preserved in the *Blon-po bka'-thang* dating from about the fourteenth century, gNya'-khri bTsan-po descended from heaven upon the sacred mountain of Yar-lha-sham-po in Yarlung, where he was received by a circle of twelve chiefs who had been harassed by the four kings of the world: China, India, sTa gzigs (i.e., Iran), and Ge-sar. Because he came down from the sky by means of a rope or a ladder, that is, because he was a divine being, they decided to make him king and installed him on a wooden throne which four men carried on their necks. This is why, according to the traditions, he was called gNya'-khri bTsan-po, that is, "Neck-Enthroned Mighty One." It is interesting to note that he is regarded as the youngest of the sons of the heavenly Supreme Being and that he agrees to descend from heaven to earth on the condition that he be given "ten heavenly magical objects" [1]. Similarly, both in the Tun-huang documents (dating from 1036) and on the early stone inscriptions of Yarlung and Lhasa, the royal genealogy begins with 'O-lde spu-rgyal who descended from the zenith of the nine heavens upon earth by means of a rope which passed through the nine atmospheric levels [2].

This summary might be quite enough to show the supremely important part played by such themes as the first king, the heaven, mountam, the rope or the ladder in the Tibetan foundation myth: gNya'-khri bTsan-po descended from heaven to the summit of the mountain by

---

1) G. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Rome, 1949), p. 732; M. Hermanns, "Schöpfungs- und Abstammungsmythen der Tibeter" (*Anthropos*, XLI-XLIV, 1946-49, pp. 275-98, 817-47), pp. 821-22; G. Tucci, "The Sacred Characters of the Kings of Ancient Tibet" (*East and West*, VI, 1955, pp. 197-205), p. 202. This article is the same as his "La regalità sacra nell'antico Tibet" in *La regalità sacra* (Studies in the History of Religions, IV; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), pp. 189-203; Ariane MacDonald, "La naissance du monde au Tibet" (*La Naissance du Monde* = Sources orientales, 1; Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1959, pp. 419-52), pp. 419-23, 427. Cf. also D. Snellgrove and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), pp. 23-25.

2) Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls,* pp. 730, 733, and his "The Sacred Characters of the Kings of Ancient Tibet," p. 199; MacDonald, *op. cit.,* pp. 420, 423, 426; Snellgrove and Richardson, *op. cit.,* p. 23. Cf. also G. Tucci and W. Heissig, *Die Religionen Tibets und der Mongolei* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1970), pp. 241, 250, 257.

means of a rope or a ladder [3]). And according to a version, we should
keep in mind, when he was about to descend he was granted "ten
heavenly magical objects" [4]). The magical objects may possibly be
taken to mean some sort of sacred regalia.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the symbolism of heavenly
"descent" or *katabasis* (Tucci) plays the extremely important part
in Tibetan foundation myth. By the symbolism of "descent" I mean
what a Japanese ethnologist Dr. Masao Oka calls a vertical cosmology,
that is, the belief in the heavenly divine being who descends from
heaven to mountaintops, to forests, and to trees. I am not speaking
of the descent symbolism in general, which is undoubtedly almost
universal. What I am concerned with is a mythical theme which might
be specifically inner Asiatic, that is, the theme that the founder of a
dynasty or a nation descends from heaven to "mountaintops," to
"forests," and to "trees."

On the basis of all this as well as some other information (e.g., the
return of the dead kings to heaven by means of a luminous rope,
etc.) Professor Tucci has made an interesting observation: "the
Tibetan religion seems to be mainly of a celestial nature; gNam, heaven,
holds in it the same place as does the Tängri among the Turco-Mon-
golian populations" [5]). According to the scholar, this celestial religion
was brought into aboriginal chthonic Tibet by a conquering aristoc-
racy [6]). In other words, Tucci tries to see in the Tibetan religion those
two different currents of religious conceptions which in turn are based
upon two different ways of life, i.e., the dual nature in religion quite
similar to that which, for example, the late Professor R. Pettazzoni has
particularly emphasized in Greek religion [7]). I will quote the following
paragraph from Tucci because of the methodological significance it
might have for the study of Tibetan as well as Korean and Japanese
religions: [8])

---

3) Cf. Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls,* p. 733; MacDonald, *op. cit.,* p. 427.

4) MacDonald, *op. cit.,* p. 423.

5) Tucci, "The Sacred Characters . . .," p. 202.

6) *Ibid.,* pp. 203, 204.

7) Cf. Pettazzoni, *La religion dans la Grèce antique des origines à Alexandre
le Grand* (Paris: Payot, 1953), pp. 17-31, and his "Introduction to the History
of Greek Religion," *Essays on the History of Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill,
1967), pp. 68-80.

8) Tucci, *op. cit.,* p. 204. Cf. his *Tibetan Painted Scrolls,* p. 737.

We can easily identify two currents which gradually meet but never mingle, in such wise that their conflicting character and diverse origin is clearly apparent. The one is prevalently terrestial, the other celestial; the one belongs perhaps to the most ancient ethnical stock, of whose composition we know little; the other has been introduced by the migrations of nomads and shepherds who settled in the country, descending in that North-East South-West direction which is still shown by the division of the territory in four wings (*ru*) : one on the centre, the other to the right with an additional one to the west, and the last to the left, eastward. They, like the Altaic populations, placed heaven, the Tängri, at the summit; they marched in their expansion divided into wings; their social organization was founded on clans, independent but interconnected, the so-called *rus*, "bones," just as the Mongols call their own *yasun*, bones.

I have no intention of going into the interesting but highly complicated problem of the dual nature of Tibetan religion as such. My aim is simply to draw attention to the morphological similarities that exist between the Tibetan foundation myth and those found in Japan and Korea and to suggest that the symbolism of heavenly „descent" or *katabasis* could be associated with what might be called an inner Asiatic mythological tradition.

JAPAN AND THE SYMBOLISM OF DESCENT

The foundation myth in ancient Japan is astonishingly similar to that in Tibet: *in illo tempore* the Goddess Amaterasu, together with the God Takaki (= Takamimusubi), ordered Ninigi her grandson to descend from heaven to the summit of Mount Takachiho on the "Central Land of Reed Plains" and there to assume sovereignty. The "Central Land of Reed Plains" may be identified with the islands of Japan but, more precisely, the notion presupposes a cosmology: in Japan, just as in ancient Tibet and elsewhere [9]), the universe is seen as structured by three cosmic zones: heaven ("Plain of High Heaven"), earth ("Central Land of Reed Plains"), and the underworld ("Land of Yomi") connected by a central axis (e.g., mountain, tree, pole, etc.). Following this cosmology, we may assume that the notition of the "Central Land of Reed Plains" corresponds to the second and central zone of the universe, which is to be the land ruled by Ninigi descending from heaven. In contrast to the first cosmic zone which is regarded as sacred, real and essential, this earthly middle zone is con-

9) MacDonald, *op. cit.*, pp. 419-20; also C. Blacker, "Religions of Japan" (in *Historia Religionum*, II, ed. by C. J. Bleeker and G. Widengren, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971, pp. 516-49), p. 518.

ceived as profane, unreal and chaotic. In order to transform this zone
into the "Land of Fresh Rice Grains" and there to establish the sacred
order, Ninigi, a baby newly born in the "Plain of High Heaven,"
descends to the summit of Mount Takachiho. Ninigi thus emerges as
the exemplary "archetype" of the historical Japanese emperors who,
based on the richness and abundance of the rice harvest, maintain
the cosmic order overarching the three cosmic zones.

There are several versions of the foundation myth which appear in
the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* (or *Nihonshoki*) compiled in 712 and 720
respectively. A number of primary themes constituting the myth de-
serve our attention.

(1) The symbolism of heavenly descent plays the supremely im-
portant part in Japanese foundation myth; indeed it is attested in all the
six versions of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*: Ninigi descends from
heaven to the summit of Mount Takachiho.

(2) Who orders Ninigi to descend from heaven? According to the
three versions (main text and the 6th and 4th variants of the *Nihongi*),
Takamimusubi orders it, while in the 2nd variant of the *Nihongi* and
in the *Kojiki* the heavenly descent is ordered by both Takamimusubi
(= Takaki) and Amaterasu. Amaterasu orders it only in the 1st
variant of the *Nihongi*. From this striking fact as well as from some
other textual analyses Dr. Shōei Mishina has come to the following
important conclusion: the main text and the 6th variant of the *Nihongi*
are the earliest versions, and the 1st variant of the *Nihongi* and the
Kojiki are the latest ones, while the 4th and the 2nd variants of the
Nihongi come in-between chronologically [10]). Masao Oka, for his part,
paying serious attention to the various versions from an ethno-
historical perspective, has asserted that Takamimusubi and Amaterasu
must originally have belonged to two different ethno-cultural circles:
Takamimusubi belonged to the Altaic, patriarchal, militarily organized,
aggressive people who migrated to Japan perhaps during the third or
fourth century A.D. and conquered the agricultural people who had

---

10) Mishina, *Nissen shinwa densetsu no kenkyū* (Osaka: Yanagihara Shoten
1943), pp. 14-67, especially pp. 58ff., and his "Nihon shinwa-ron," *Nihon rekishi*
XXIII (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1964), pp. 310-18. This last-mentioned essay
is reprinted in his *Mishina Shōei ronbun-shū*, I (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1970), pp.
122-30. Cf. also T. Matsumura, *Nihon shinwa no kenkyū*, III (Tokyo: Baifūkan,
1955), pp. 514f., 516.

already inhabited the islands. Amaterasu, on the other hand, belonged to the Austroasian land rice cultivators who had a matrilineal social system. They migrated to Japan perhaps during the fifth or fourth century B.C. from the region south of the Yangtze River and came to form a part of the basic agrarian population. In Oka's opinion, these two sets of myths, originally unrelated, came to be connected by the myth compilers through the marrying off of Takamimusubi's daughter to Amaterasu's son (= Oshihomimi), thus begetting Ninigi. Oka is firmly convinced that the original kami of the imperial clan was not Amaterasu but Takamimusubi (= Takaki), which means the kami who descends from heaven upon a tall tree [11]).

I hold that the studies made by Mishina and Oka are of basic importance for historians of Japanese religion who are concerned with the cultural complexities of its early phases. On the basis of Mishina's textual analysis, we are willing to accept Oka's interpretation insofar as he has proved the structural "duality" of the foundation myth as well as the "duality" of socio-cultural strata in ancient Japan. Oka's indications might have far-reaching implications. Suffice to mention only that we can discern in the history of Japanese Supreme Beings that phenomenon which is significant in the history of religions: in Japanese religious history Takamimusubi is a celestial deity par excellence. However, he is replaced by Izanagi and Izanami (Austroasian in origin according to Oka) who are, in turn, substituted by Amaterasu. In fact, Amaterasu became the Supreme Being by the early eighth century, conquering the religious prestige hitherto enjoyed by Izanagi and Izanami.

(3) According to three earlier versions, Ninigi is wrapped in the

---

11) Oka, "Kōshitsu no shinwa: sono nigensei to shuzoku-teki bunka-teki keifu ni tsuite," *Yomiuri hyōron* (No. 12, 1949), pp. 79-82, which is now reprinted in T. Ōbayashi (ed.), *Shinwa* (Tokyo: Shibundō, 1967), pp. 74-78; "Nihon minzoku = bunka no keisei," *Zusetsu Nihon bunka-shi taikei*, I (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1956), pp. 106-16, which is now available in German translation as M. Oka, "Das Werden der japanischen Volkskultur," *Beiträge zur Japanologie*, 3 (1966), pp. 28-54; "Nihon bunka no kiso kōzō," *Nihon minzokugaku taikei*, II (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958), pp. 5-21; "Ethno-Historical Formation of the Japanese People," in Japanese National Commission for UNESCO (compiled), *Japan: its Land, People, and Culture* (Tokyo, 1958), pp. 110-16. See also his view expressed in Oka *et alii*, *Nihon minzoku no kigen* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958), pp. 43-51, 54f., 59-80, 84-89. Cf. Josph M. Kitagawa, "Prehistoric Background of Japanese Religion," *History of Religions*, II (No. 2, 1963), pp. 308-11, 318.

ma·toko-o·fusuma (lit., a piece of cloth which covers the bed) when he
descends from heaven to the summit of the mountain. This is un-
doubtedly related to a piece of cloth (*fusuma*) over the sacred bed
on which the future emperor sleeps ritually in the enthronement
ceremony. We hold that the *fusuma* and its mythical representation
are the Japanese counterparts of the felt carpet as it was used in the
enthronement ceremony of pastoral societies of Central and North
Asia [12]).

(4) In the "latest versions" (Mishina), mention is made of the
"five clan heads" (*itsu·tomo·no·wo*) who descended from heaven in
attendance to Ninigi. It is interesting to note that they are the same
deities as those who play important parts in the ceremony of calling
back the lost of soul of Amaterasu which is delineated in the so-called
Amaterasu myth. That is, the "five clan heads" appear both in the
Amaterasu myth and the foundation myth, and they were actually the
mythical ancestors of the sacerdotal families which played crucial parts
both in the ceremony of calling back the lost soul and in the enthrone-
ment ceremony as well. The word "five clan heads" reminds us also
of an interesting account in the *Kujiki,* according to which the Mono-
nobe clan, which was possibly in charge of military affairs, was
divided into five groups, each of which was further sub-divided into
five smaller units, making a total of twenty-five groups ($5 \times 5 = 25$).
It is in this fashion, the *Kujiki* tells us, that the Mononobe clan
descended from heaven to the summit of the mountain in central
Japan [13]).

(5) When Ninigi is about to descent from heaven, he is given the
famous "three sacred treasures" which are regarded as Japanese re-
galia: beads, mirror, and the sword. This theme reminds us of the
"ten heavenly magical objects" in Tibetan foundation myth which were
granted to gNya'-khri bTsan-po. In both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*
(variant 1) it is Amaterasu who gives them to Ninigi as symbols of
divinely sanctioned authority.

(6) In the "latest versions" (Mishina), mention is made of the
equally famous "divine mandate." According to the *Kojiki,* Takaki

---

12) I will discuss this very important theme in a forthcoming paper.

13) Cf. *Shintei-zōho kokushi taikei,* VII (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan,
1936), p. 28; also M. Oka, "Ethno-Historical Formation of the Japanese People,"
p. 114, and Matsumura, *op. cit.,* III, p. 515.

and Amaterasu imposed the command upon their grandson Ninigi: "the Land of Fresh Rice Grains has been entrusted to you as the land you are to rule. In accordance with the command, descend from heaven!" The text in the *Nihongi* is particularly significant as Amaterasu here declares the eternal legitimacy of the rule of Japanese islands by her descendants, i.e., the imperial household: "the Land of Fresh Rice Grains is the land which my descendants shall be lords of. Do thou, my August Grandchild, proceed thither and govern it. Go! and may prosperity attend thy dynasty, and may it, like heaven and earth, endure forever."

We have enumerated all the important mythical themes constituting the Japanese foundation myth, indicating some problems involved in the different versions. From all this we can understanl that it follows a certain mythical scenario which we may summarize as follows: the celestial Supreme Being(s) — iether Takamimusubi or Amaterasu or both of them — order(s) Ninigi, a newborn baby (their grandson) who according to three versions of the *Nihongi* is covered with the *ma-toko-o-fusuma,* to descend from heaven to the summit of the mountain. On that occasion, according to the latest versions, he is granted the divine mandate as well as the sacred regalia (= three treasures) and then descends to the mountain accompanied by the "five clan heads."

If we compare this foundation myth with that of ancient Tibet, we cannot fail to notice that in spite of some differences in details they are essentially the same in structure; in both of them the important mythical motifs are the symbolism of "descent" or *katabasis,* the first king, heaven, and the mountain. In addition, Ninigi is the kami descending from heaven, just as gNya'-khri bTsan-po is in Tibet. It should be mentioned in passing that the Japanese word *kami* in the sense of the divine being derives originally from the Altaic word *kami,* as has been indicated by Prof. Shichirō Murayama, a Japanese philologist on Altaic languages [14]).

---

14) Cf. M. Oka, "Nihon bunka no kiso kōzō," p. 15; Oka *et alii, Nihon minzoku no kigen,* p. 238, n. 23. According to Prof. Susumu Ōno, who takes seriously the law of vocal harmony found in the ancient Japanese language, the word *kami* (which means "god") has linguistically nothing to do with the word *kami* in the sense of "above." Cf. his *Nihon-go no kigen* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957), p. 154. It should be mentioned in passing that the vocal harmony

KOREAN FOUNDATION MYTHS

Turning attention to Korea, we find that this neighbor of Japan possesses a good number of foundation myths with fascinating mythical images and symbols. Our knowledge of Korean foundation myths comes mainly from the *Samguk yusa,* compiled in about 1280 in Chinese by a Buddhist monk Iryŏn (1206-89). Compared with this, the *Samguk sagi,* which was compiled in 1145 in Chinese by Kim Pu-sik (1075-1151), is less valuable for our purpose although its importance for the study of early Korean history surpasses greatly that of the *Samguk yusa.* The *Samguk yusa,* though compiled in the thirteenth century, is nonetheless considered by scholars to have preserved archaic religious and mythical traditions of early Korean nations [15]).

Korea was divided into several minor nations in the early stages of her history. Chosŏn and Puyŏ took shape as the first true states by the third century B.C. in the northern part of the Korean peninsula, while three Han nations arose in the south in the second century A.D.: Mahan, Pyŭnhan, and Chinhan. However, in the latter half of the fourth century, three big kingdoms were established: Koguryŏ (from Puyŏ) in the north, Paekche (from Mahan) in the southwest, and Silla (from Chinhan) in the southeast of the peninsula. Between Paekche and Silla, at the southern tip of the peninsula, there was also a small nation variously called Karak, Kaya or Mimana, which came out from Pyŭnhan.

The beginnings of these Korean nations are inseparably interwoven with the myth relating the miraculous birth of the founders. The first type of Korean foundation myth is what might be called "light-pregnancy myth." For example, Tongmyŏng, founder of Puyŏ, was born of a woman who became pregnant by the "descending mystical light" [16]).

---

is one of the striking features of Uralo-Altaic languages such as Mongolian, Turkic, Tungus, Finnic, and so on (Ōno, *op. cit.,* pp. 139-47).

15) A good comprehensive review of Korean studies by Japanese scholars is given by S. Mishina and Y. Murakami, "The Development of the Studies of Korean History and Culture in Japan," *Acta Asiatica,* 9 (1965), pp. 83-110.

16) K. Shiratori, "Fuyo-koku no shiso Tōmei-ō ni tsuite," in *Hattori Unokichi sensei koki shukuga kinen ronbun-shū* (Tokyo: Fuzanbō, 1936), pp. 537-70; H. Ikeuchi, *Mansen-shi kenkyū,* I (Tokyo: Sokokusha, 1951), pp. 439-68; T. Mikami, *Kodai tōhoku Azia-shi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1966), pp. 227-28, 483-85.

The same story is also told of Chu Mong who founded Koguryŏ [17]). This type of foundation myth is not unknown outside of Korea; almost the same mythical story is also known of T'ai-wuti who established the T'o-pa (Taghbach) Wei dynasty (ethnically Mongolian or Turkic) and of A-pao-chi who founded the Khitan state of Liao (ethnically Mongolian). The most famous of this type of myth is, of course, a story relating the celestial origin of Genghis Khan [18]). It is beyond doubt that the mythical theme of the founder of a dynasty or a nation born of "descending mystical light" was widespread among the nomadic peoples such as the Manchus and the Mongols [19]).

Another type of foundation myth we find in Korea is the "egg" myth. T'arhae, mythical founder of the royal Sŏk clan in Silla, is born of an egg, the egg which has come floating to the shore of the Chinhan area [20]). The myth of T'arhae is entirely associated with the egg symbolism, having nothing to do with the symbolism of heavenly "descent" or *katabasis.*

Still another type of the Korean foundation myth, with which we are concerned, is the one specifically connected with the symbolism of "descent," that is, a type of the foundation myth which tells how the founder of a nation or a dynasty descended from heaven to "mountaintops," to "forests," and to "trees."

(i) *Tangun of Ancient Chosŏn*

The foundation myth of ancient Chosŏn runs as follows: Hwang-in, the celestial Supreme Being, had a son called Hwang-wung. Hwang-wung was so full of ambition that he wanted to descend to the terrestial world and there establish a nation. Aware of his intension, his father permitted him to descend to the terrestial world, and at the same time

---

17) R. Imanishi, *Chōsen ko-shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chikazawa Shoten, 1937), pp. 475-510; H. Ikeuchi, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 87-107; Y. Suyematsu, *Seikyū shisō,* I (Tokyo: Kasai Shuppansha, 1965), pp. 29-35; T. Mikami, *op. cit.,* pp. 228, 484.

18) P. Pelliot (tr.), *Histoire secrète des Mongols,* I (Paris, 1949), p. 21; Jean-Paul Roux, "La Naissance du monde chez les Turcs et les Mongols" (*La naissance du Monde,* pp. 283-95), p. 289. also Rolf A. Stein, "Architecture et pensée religieuse en Extrême-Orient," *Arts Asiatiques,* IV (1957), p. 180.

19) A number of myths of this type have been exhaustively collected and studied by Mishina in his *Shinwa to bunka kyōiki* (Kyoto: Daiyasu Shuppansha, 1948), pp. 21742, which is now reprinted in his *Mishina Shōeī ronbun-shū,* III Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1971), pp. 489-511.

20) Suyematsu, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 52-54.

he granted his son three items of the sacred regalia. Then Hwang-wung, accompanied by three functional deities controlling the wind, rain, and the clouds, and followed by three thousand other people, descended to the sacred *tan* tree on the summit of Mount Tehbaek and founded ancient Chosŏn. Hwang-wung is also called Tangun (= prince of the *tan* tree) because he is supposed to have descended from heaven to the tree called *tan* [21]).

Even a glance is enough to see the remarkable similarities that exist between this foundation myth and those of ancient Tibet and Japan. Hwang-wung does not simply descend from heaven to the summit of Mount Tehbaek; he is bestowed "three items of the sacred regalia," just as gNya'-khri bTsan-po is given "ten heavenly magical objects," and just as Ninigi is granted "three sacred treasures." In addition, Hwang-wung is accompanied by three ministers of the wind, rain, and the clouds. This fact strongly reminds us of a mythical scenario in Japanese foundation myth that Ninigi is accompanied by "five clan heads" on his descent to Mount Takachiho and that the Mononobe clan was divided into twenty-five groups ($5 \times 5 = 25$). Special attention should be paid to the important part played by numbers three and five in these foundation myths. It has often been indicated by specialists in Korean studies that numbers three and five are closely associated with the social organization or group system which was predominant in ancient Korean nations at least among the ruling classes. For example, Silla had initially been divided into the three groups which were later sub-divided into six groups ($3 \times 2 = 6$),[22]) while Koguryŏ and Paekche were divided into five groups, each of which was further sub-divided into five smaller units, making a total of twenty-five groups ($5 \times 5 = 25$). In addition, it is interesting to note that the capital city of Koguryŏ and also of Paekche was divided into five areas[23]). According to Oka, the three or five-group system is fre-

---

21) Y. Suyematsu (ed.), *Samguk yusa* (Tokyo: Kasai Shuppansha, 1964), p. 32. Cf. M. Naka, "Chōsen ko-shi kō," *Shigaku zasshi*, V (No. 4, 1894), pp. 283f., now reprinted in his *Gaikō shaku-shi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958), pp. 73f.; K. Shiratori, "Chōsen ko-densetsu kō," *Shigaku zasshi*, V (No. 12, 1894), pp. 950-63; Imanishi, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-130; T. Takahashi, "Sangoku iji no chū oyobi Dankun densetsu no hatten," *Chōsen gakuhō*, No. 7 (March, 1955), pp. 63-90.

22) Suyematsu, *Shiragi-shi no sho-mondai* (Tokyo: Tōyōbunko, 1954), pp. 235-307, and his *Seikyū shisō*, I, pp. 73-77.

23) On the five-group system of Koguryŏ, see Naka, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-8;

quently met with among the horseback-riding nomadic peoples such as the Mongols and the Turks [24].

In this connection, special attention should also be paid to the following three words in Japanese each of which is closely related to the social institutions:: *uji, kabane,* and *hala-kala.* In the first place, the word *uji* or *udi* meant a patrilineal and patriarchal clan in ancient Japan. According to Ōno, *udi* in Japanese corresponds to *ul* (clan) in Korean since *d* in Japanese corresponds to *l* in Korean. It also corresponds to *uru-q* (patrilineal relatives) in Mongolian, *uri* (patrilineal descendants) in Buryat, *urū* (patrilineal relatives) in Kirgiz, *ur* (sons) in Tungus [25]. This fact means that the Japanese *uji* system corresponds linguistically as well as in what it denotes to similar social institutions of other peoples belonging to the Altaic language family.

Second, in ancient Japan, the occupational groups (clans) were called *kabane,* meaning "bones." In the ancient Korean nations (e.g., Silla and Koguryŏ) too, clans and occupational classification were expressed with a Chinese character meaning "bones." Masao Oka and Namio Egami agree in strongly suggesting that the Japanese and Korean occupational group structure was closely related with the fact that among Mongolian tribes the word *yasun* ("bones") was used to denote the patrilineal clan [26].

Third, Oka believes that when the Altaic people entered Japan as the ruling classes their *uji* and *kabane* structures were superimposed on the earlier social structures which had been based partly on the *hala-kala,* and partly on the matrilineal family system [27]. It is noteworthy that the word *hala-kala* meaning brethren or kinfolk corresponds,

Shiratori, "Ganto oyobi Kokunaijō kō," *Shigaku zasshi,* XXV (1914), pp. 424-47, 606-28; Imanishi, *op. cit.,* pp. 407-46; Ikeuchi, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 325-87; Mishina, "Kōkuri no gozoku ni tsuite," *Chōsen gakuhō,* No. 6 (Aug., 1954), pp. 13-57; Suyematsu, *Seikyū shisō,* I, pp. 63-69. On the five-group system of Paekche, see Ikeuchi, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 344-64; Suyematsu, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 69-73.

24) Cf. Oka, "Nihon bunka no kiso kōzō," p. 15; Matsumura, *op. cit.,* III, p. 515.

25) Ōno, *op. cit.,* pp. 135f.; S. M. Shirokogoroff, *Social Organization of the Northern Tungus* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1933), pp. 178f.

26) Cf. Oka, "Nihon bunka no kiso kōzō," p. 15, and his "Ethno-Historical Formation of the Japanese People," pp. 114ff; Oka *et alii, Nihon minzoku no kigen,* p. 73; Egami, *Kiba minzoku kokka* (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1967), pp. 219f.

27) Oka, "Nihon minzoku = bunka no keisei," pp. 108f., and his "Ethno-Historical Formation of the Japanese People," p. 113.

according to Ōno, to *kara* or *kaya* in Korean, *xala* in Manchu, and *kala* in the dialect of the Tungus living in Birar, Kumar, and the Khingan Mountains of Manchuria. In Orochi and Goldi the word *xala* is also used to denote the kinfolk. The old Turkic word *kayaš* (relatives) also corresponds to *kaya* in Korean [28]). It is very significant that each of these words denotes the kinfolk who are united by the consciousness of patrilineal descent and the principle of exogamy.

As we can see, these similarities are so remarkable that we are tempted to assume at least tentatively that the meaning of some of the myths, symbols, and rituals relating to the Japanese and Korean upper classes should be deciphered in relation to what might be called the "cultural circle" of North Asia including Manchuria and Mongolia.

(ii) *Pak Hyŏkkŏse of Silla*

The story similar to the Tangun myth of ancient Chosŏn is also told of Pak Hyŏkkŏse who descended from heaven to a forest at the foot of the mountain and founded the kingdom of Silla: [29])

There were six villages in the Chinhan area. According to ancient traditions, each founder of the six villages descended from heaven to the summit of a particular mountain. In early March all the founders of the villages, followed by their companions, had a meeting on a river and said, "Since we have no king to rule over us all the men and women are unrestrained and lead their lives as they wish. Let us look, therefore, for a man of virtue, and we will have a nation and its capital city with him as our king." Then, they climbed a hill. While looking southwards they noticed a dazzling stream of light descending from heaven to an ivy-mantled well at the foot of Mount Yang. They also found a white horse bowing again and again to something. Curious about it, they came down the hill and approached the ivy-mantled well. The horse, aware of their intrusion, gave a loud neigh and then flew off to the sky, leaving a purple egg. When they broke the egg, there came out, to their surprisce, a boy looking great and brilliant. Then they went to a nearby fountain and gave a bath to the newborn

---

28) Ōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 136f.; Shirokogoroff, *op. cit.*, pp. 120f.

29) Suyematsu (ed.), *Samguk yusa*, pp. 52-54. Cf. Suyematsu, *Shiragi-shi no sho-mondai*, pp. 49-57, 104-12, and his *Seikyū shisō*, I, pp. 50-62.

baby. The bright light was radiating from within him, birds and animals danced around him, heaven and earth shook with joy, and the sun and moon shone more brightly than ever before. Hence he was called Hyŏkkŏse (= man who rules over the world with light), and his last name was called Pak (= gourd) because it looked like the egg of which he was born.

In reading this we are struck by a series of archaic images and symbols, particularly those of heavenly "descent" or *katabasis*, light, and the egg. Hyŏkkŏse's celestial origin is pronounced by a complex of these images and symbols: (1) he descends from heaven to the foot of Mount Yang by means of a dazzling stream of light; (2) his presence is accompanied by the radiating light from within himself and the cosmic light without, and he is precisely called the man who rules over the world with "light"; and (3) he is adored by a white horse which flies off to heaven.

Comparing this foundation myth with those of ancient Tibet, Chosŏn, and Japan, we see that all of them share the symbolism of heavenly descent, but at the same time we should not fail to notice also considerable differences which distinguish this one from the other three: (1) a stream of light plays a conspicuous part in the myth as a means by which Hyŏkkŏse descends from heaven to the foot of the mountain; and (2) all the founders greet Hyŏkkŏse on his descent rather than descending with him. (In this sense, the myth of Hyŏkkŏse, though similar to the Tibetan myth, is different from those of ancient Chosŏn and Japan.) In spite of these differences, however, it is beyond dispute that the symbolism of descent plays a central part in all of these four foundation myths.

It should be mentioned in passing that the egg symbolism plays a considerable part in our myth: Hyŏkkŏse, mythical founder of Silla, is born of an egg. Since in the mythology of Southeast Asia and Indonesia the egg is often associated with the symbols and images of cosmic renewal and renovation, the meaning of Hyŏkkŏse's birth from an egg seems fairly clear, that is, his birth brings about the new world par excellence. Collecting and analyzing the various types of the foundation myths as they are found in Northeast Asia as well as in Southeast Asia and Indonesia, Mishina has convincingly proved that the egg symbolism has nothing to do with the foundation myths of inner Asian peoples although it is extremely dominant among the peoples of

Southeast Asia and Indonesia [30]). It is clear from all this that the
myth of Pak Hyŏkkŏse includes the images and symbols deriving both
from the north and the south.

(iii) *Kim Archi of Silla*

We must now turn our attention to another foundation myth in
Silla in which the symbolism of heavenly "descent" or *katabasis* plays
a central part, i.e., the foundation myth of the royal Kim clan of Silla,
which runs: [31])

It was an evening in August. When a man called Hogong was on the
way to a village to the west of Wŏlsheng, he saw a brilliant light
radiating from within a forest. To his surprise, a belt of purple clouds
was descending from heaven to earth, and at the end of the clouds he
found a golden box hanging on the boughs of a tree; the bright light
was coming forth from the box. Hogong recognized also a white cock
crowing under the tree. The king, informed of the event, came imme-
diately to the forest. When he opened the box, he found a boy who
was first lying in it and then stood up. The whole event seems quite
similar to the way in which Hyŏkkŏse came into the world. He was
called Archi because he liked it, and his last name was called Kim
(= gold) because he came out from a golden box. From this Kim
Archi originates the royal Kim clan of Silla.

We shall simply keep this fact in mind: Kim Archi descends from
heaven to the forest of Wŏlsheng by means of a belt of purple clouds.
It is also noteworthy that together with the theme of descent the
symbolism of light plays a conspicuous part in our myth.

(iv) *Suro of Karak (Kaya)*

The foundation myth of Karak is extremely interesting in many
respects: [32])

---

30) Cf. Mishina, *Shinwa to bunka kyōiki*, pp. 16-59, especially pp. 53ff. On the
egg symbolism in general, see M. Haavio, *Väinämöinen, Eternal Sage* (FF Com-
munications LXI, 144, Helsinki, 1952), pp. 54-63; H. Baumann, *Das doppelte
Geschlecht* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1955), pp. 164ff., 184ff., 268ff.; M. Eliade,
Patterns in Comparative Religion (Cleveland and New York, 1958), pp. 413ff.;
Anna-Britta Hellbom, "The Creation Egg," *Ethnos*, XXVIII (1963), pp. 63-
105; C. H. Long, *Alpha: the Myths of Creation* (New York: George Braziller,
1963), pp. 109-45.
31) Suyematsu (ed.), *Samguk yusa*, pp. 62-63. Cf. Suyematsu, *Seikyū shisō*, I,
pp. 54-60.
32) Suyematsu (ed.), *Samguk yusa*, pp. 178-8c. Cf. also Mishina, *Nissen shin-*

Since the creation of heaven and earth, the Karak region had no definite nationality nor fixed title of the king and his subjects. Nine pricelings emerged and ruled the peasants of a hundred houses and a population of seventy-five thousand. People in those days used to build their houses along the mountain slopes or on the fields and lived by cultivating the land, digging wells for drinking water. It was on the purification day in March in the eighteenth year (= 42 A.D.) of Kuang-wuti (B.C. 5-52 A.D.), founder of the Hou Han dynasty, that an unusual mystical voice was heard coming from Mount Kuji. (The mountain is so called because its shape looks like a tortoise.) Curious about it, two or three hundred men and women came up to gather on the summit of the mountain. In the meantime they heard the voice; it sounded like a human voice, but his figure was invisible.

"Is anyone present here?"

"Here we are, villagers," answered the princelings.

"Can you tell me where I am?"

"You are on Mount Kuji," they replied.

"I am going to descend here, in accordance with the command of the celestial god, in order to found a nation and there to rule. You should welcome your great heavenly king by digging a hole at the summit of the mountain and by dancing and singing — 'O tortoise, tortoise, show your head. If you don't, we will roast and eat you.' "

Following the voice, they continued to dance and sing the tortoise song. While looking up at the sky, they noticed a purple rope descending from heaven. Coming to the end of the rope they found a golden box covered with a piece of crimson cloth. They opened the box. They were surprised to find six golden eggs, all round and shining like the sun. They bowed to the eggs again and again and, carrying them back to the home of one of the princelings, put them on a carpet. Early in the morning twelve days later a number of people came to see what had happened to the eggs. When the box was opened again, they saw all the eggs were transformed into the boys looking brilliant and sitting

wa densetsu no kenkyū, pp. 112-44, and his "Sangoku iji chūshaku: Kara-kokki (1)," *Chōsen gakuhō,* No. 29 (Oct., 1963), pp. 148-70; Suyematsu, *Mimana kōbō-shi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1956), pp. 223-32, and his *Seikyū shisō,* I, pp. 42-50.

cross-legged. The boys grew taller day by day until in two weeks they were about two and a half meters high like ancient Chinese kings. Accordingly everything was arranged so that on the next full-moon day they acceded to the throne. One of them, called Suro, became the king of Great Karak or Kaya which was one of six Kaya states, while each of the other heavenly beings came to rule one of the five Kaya states respectively.

The foundation myth of Karak or Kaya is amazingly rich in mythical images and symbols. Let us recapitulate only some important points: (1) Suro, mythical founder of Great Karak, descends from heaven to the summit of Mount Kuji in order to found a nation, and his descent is based on the command of the celestial Being; (2) he descends by means of a purple rope; (3) there comes down a piece of crimson cloth covering six golden eggs, and the eggs are then placed on a carpet; and (4) Suro and others are born of the golden eggs shinning like the sun.

Comparing the foundation myth of ancient Korean nations with the Japanese counterparts, we are struck by the basic similarities between the two as well as some remarkable differences which distinguish them. To start with the differences: (1) some of the mythical founders of Korea, just like gNya'-khri bTsan-po in Tibet, come down from heaven by a purple rope (Suro), by a stream of light (Hyŏkkŏse), and by a belt of purple clouds (Kim Archi), whereas such a means of cosmic transportation is never used in Japanese mythology; (2) some of the first mythical kings of ancient Korea are born of an egg, i.e., Pak Hyŏkkŏse and T'arhae of Silla, and Suro of Karak, but the egg symbolism never emerges in Japanese mythology in such a context; and (3) in relation to the first and the second points, the symbolism of light is predominant in the foundation myths of Korea, but in Japan it appears only in the *Fudoki* in a slightly different context: Ninigi throws rice grains about in all directions and then the world becomes bright.

In spite of these considerable differences we can also recognize one basic similarity in structure which is commonly shared by the foundation myths of ancient Chosŏn, Silla, Karak as well as all the versions of the foundation myths of ancient Tibet and Japan: the symbolism of heavenly "descent" or *katabasis*. Just as Ninigi comes down from heaven to the summit of Mount Takachiho, just as gNya'-khri bTsan-

po comes down from heaven to the summit of the sacred mountain of Yar-lha-sham-po, so Hwang-wung comes down from heaven to the *tan* tree on the summit of Mount Tehbaek. Similarly, Pak Hyŏkkŏse descends from heaven to the forest at the foot of Mount Yang, Kim Archi to the forest of Wŏlsheng, and Suro to the summit of Mount Kuji. We have already noticed some of the striking similarities between the foundation myth of ancient Chosŏn and that of Japan. In addition to these, the following linguistic correspondences are generally accepted among scholars: (1) the word *kuji* of Mount Kuji on the summit of which Suro descends corresponds linguistically to the peak *kujifuru* (*Kojiki* and the 1st variant of the *Nihongi*) and to *kushibi* (2nd and the 4th variants of the *Nihongi*) of Mount Takachiho on which Ninigi comes down from heaven; [33]) and (2) *sohori,* another name for the peak of Mount Takachiho (6th variant of the *Nihongi*), is synonymous with the Korean word *sŏpŏr* (= Seoul), meaning "capital city" [34]).

What is particularly interesting in the foundation myth of Karak is the fact that mention is made of a piece of crimson cloth covering six golden eggs and also of a carpet on which the eggs are placed. The carpet, we would assume, has some initiatory significance because the eggs placed on it for twelve days are transformed into the boys who are almost prepared for the accession to the royal throne. In this sense, the carpet and the crimson cloth remind us strongly of that piece of cloth (*fusuma*) over the sacred bed on which the future emperor sleeps ritually in the Japanese enthronement ceremony as well as of that *ma·toko-o·fusuma* in Japanese mythology which is used for wrapping Ninigi when he descends from heaven to the summit of Mount Takachiho. The morphological similarities between the two are so striking and remarkable that it would be almost impossible to explain away these similarities in simple terms of cultural borrowings.

We have so far collected and compared the foundation myths of ancient Tibet, Japan, and Korea, and we are struck by the presence in them of what has been called celestial elements by Professor Tucci. We think there can be no doubt that the symbolism of "descent" or

---

33) Matsumura, *op. cit.,* III, p. 516.

34) Oka, "Ethno-Historical Formation of the Japanese People," p. 114; Matsumura, *op. cit.,* III, p. 516; Mishina, "Kojiki to Chōsen," in *Kojiki taisei,* V (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1962), p. 107.

katabasis was commonly shared by the ruling classes of Tibet, Japan, and Korea. Moreover, in both Tibet and Korea the cosmic rope plays an important part when the first mythical king descends from heaven to the summit of the mountain. Finally, we are inclined to hold that the three regions, Tibet, Japan, and Korea, must probably have assumed some remarkable similarities on the level of social structure, especially in reference to the Mongolian *yasun,* "bones." It seems highly probable that the ruling classes of ancient Tibet, Japan, and Korea once had their homeland in Central and North Asia where the patrilineal and patriarchal social structure with its belief in the celestial Supreme Being has been predominant. It is interesting to note in this connection that among the Mongol Buryat the following myth has been transmitted: in the beginning of the world the Highest Being ordered his grandson Gesir Bogdo to descend upon earth to be Khan. On that occasion, he agreed to follow the order on the condition that he be granted his "six wishes" [35]. Unfortunately, no mention is made of the mountain on which Gesir Bogdo should have descended from heaven, but we cannot doubt that in major points it is quite similar to the Tibetan, Japanese, and Korean foundation myths.

---

35) Cf. J. Curtin, *A Journey in Southern Siberia* (Boston, 1909), p. 130; T. Ōbayashi, *Nihon shinwa no kigen* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1961), pp. 217-18.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Periodicals

Annuaire 1971-1972, Tome LXXIX, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Ve section, sciences religieuses, 539 p.

Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission, Institute of Culture, January 1971, Vol. XIII, No 1.

Bulletin Signalitique, centre national de la recherche scientifique, 521, 1971, volume XXV, No 4, sociologie-ethnologie, 527, 1971, volume XXV, No 3, sciences religieuses, 527, volume XXVI, No 1, 1972, sciences religieuses.

Ching Feng, Quarterly Notes on Christianity and Chinese Religion and Culture, Hong Kong, Volume XIII, Number 4, 1970.

Estudios de filosofia y religiones del Oriente, Año 1, No 1, Facultad de filosofia y letras, Universidad de Buenos Aires: Simbolismo.

Euhemer, Przegląd Religioznawczy Polskie Towarzystwo Religioznawcze, 1971, 3 (81), 4 (82), 1972, 1 (83).

Folklore, Volume 81, Winter 1970, Volume 82, Spring, Summer, Autumn 1971.

History of Religions, Volume 11, Number 3, Febr. 1972.

Indian Philosophy & Culture, a Quarterly, December 1970, March 1971, Institute of Oriental Philosophy, Vrindaban, U.P. India.

Indian Cultures Quarterly, Vol, 26, No 3, 1971. Economic and Social Aspects of the Present Situation in India.

Kairos, Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Theologie, Neue Folge, XII Jahrgang 1970, Heft 1, XIII Jahrgang, 1971, Heft 1, 3-4.

Monumenta Nipponica. Studies in Japanese Culture, Volume XXVI, Numbers 1-2, 3-4, Sophia University, Tokyo.

Tenri Journal of Religion, December 1970.

Theologie der Gegenwart, 13 Jg., 1970/4, 14 Jg. 1971/1, 2, 3, 15 Jg. 1972/1.

Theologische Zeitschrift, herausgegeben von der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Basel, Jahrgang 27, Heft 3, Mai-Juni 1971, Heft 5, September-Oktober 1971, Heft 6, November-Dezember 1971, Jahrgang 28, Heft 1, Januar-Februar 1972, Heft 2, März-April 1972.

Revue théologique de Louvain, 2e Année, 1971, facs. 1, 2, 3, 3e Année, 1972, fasc. 1.

Vetera Christianorum, Anno 8, 1971, fasc. 1.

COMMUNICATION

BRANDON MEMORIAL APPEAL

Department of Comparative Religion
The University of Manchester
England

In view of the contribution of the late Professor S. G. F. Brandon to international scholarship and to Manchester University in particular a group of his friends and colleagues are launching a public appeal for funds to raise a suitable memorial to him.

One possible form of the memorial would be for a triennial lectureship whereby a scholar of acknowledged international standing would spend several days in the Department giving not only public lectures but also seminars for staff and research students, and thereby contributing to the total work of the Department. Other possibilities are also being considered. To realize this aim a sum of at least 2,500 must be raised.

We are writing to invite you to contribute to this fund. There is no fixed rate for contributions; rather we hope that all will contribute as generously as they feel able. Cheques should be made payable to the University of Manchester, and sent to the Treasurer, Mr. A. N. Marlow, Department of Classics, The University, Manchester M13 9PL, England.

Thanking you in anticipation of your support.

Yours sincerely,

F. F. Bruce (Chairman)
J. R. Hinnells (Secretary)

Memorial Appeal Committee:

F. F. Bruce (Chairman), H. Cunliffe-Jones, J. R. Hinnells (Secretary), H. D. Lewis, T. O. Ling, A. N. Marlow (Treasurer), E. J. Sharpe, R. N. Smart.

UMBANDA — EINE BRASILIANISCHE RELIGION

VON

HORST H. FIGGE *)

Im zweiten Drittel dieses Jahrhunderts entstand in Brasilien die Umbanda, eine neue Religion, die inzwischen insbesondere in den Großstädten über eine Millionen zählende Anhängerschaft verfügt. Sie kann als animistisch-mediunistisch charakterisiert und als Konsolidierung des brasilianischen Volkskatholizismus in den vakant gewordenen Formen ehemals afro-brasilianischer Sekten verstanden werden.

Historische Grundlagen

Die Tatsache, daß die augenfälligsten Elemente der brasilianischen Kultur europäischen Ursprungs sind oder zumindest europastämmiges Aussehen besitzen, führt leicht zu einer Unterschätzung der inzwischen erreichten Selbständigkeit und zu einer Mißachtung der außereuropäischen kulturellen Vorgänger. Trifft der Europäer dann auf ihm fremde Elemente, so ist er geneigt, diese nicht in ihrer tatsächlichen Einbettung in eine unabhängige brasilianische Kultur, sondern als (im wesentlichen afrikanische) Fremdkörper in einer eigentlich doch europäischen Tochterkultur anzusehen.

Demgegenüber hob bereits Ramos deutlich hervor, „daß die allmähliche Entafrikanisierung des Negers von einer Enteuropäisierung des Weißen begleitet war". So wie sich heute nur noch wenige weiße Brasilianer in einer Art kränklicher Sehnsucht direkt Europa verpflichtet glauben, fühlen sich die schwarzen Brasilianer nicht als brasilianische Neger (weder im Sinne einer internationalen Solidarität, noch als kulturelle Bindung an Afrika verstanden). Von Splittergruppen abgesehen, die im wesentlichen durch den ununterbrochenen Strom der Einwanderer genährt werden, hat sich in diesem Jahrhun-

dert auch auf kulturellem Gebiet eine Art von brasilianischem Selbst-
bewußtsein gebildet. Sein religiöser Ausdruck ist die Umbanda.

Der Katholizismus, zumindest in seiner orthodoxen Form, war die
Religion der Herren und ist die der sozialen Oberschicht; die Priester-
schaft besteht noch heute zu ganz unverhältnismäßig grossem Teil aus
hellhäutigen Brasilianern und europäischen Einwanderern. Die weniger
previligierten Schichten, in denen sich die Brasilianisierung zunächst
im wesentlichen vollzog, erhielten ihren Glauben in erster Linie aus
portugiesischem Populärkatholizismus und Volksglauben, aus india-
nischen und afrikanischen Religionen und Mischungen aller Schat-
tierungen. Offiziell wurden der Glaube und religiöse Praktiken der
breitesten Bevölkerungskreise bis zu Beginn dieses Jahrhunderts nicht
zur Kenntnis genommen; was umso leichter war, als sich die Anhänger
auch der verschiedenen Sekten — gezwungenermaßen oder auch (auf-
grund der Tatsache, daß sie getauft waren) mit Überzeugung — im
allgemeinen als Katholiken bezeichneten.

Im Kapitel 'Akatholische Religionen' des 'Buchs der Jahrhundert-
feier' 1901 sind zum vierhundersten Jahrestag der Entdeckung Bra-
siliens die afro- und indio-brasilianischen Sekten mit keinem Wort
erwähnt.

In den ersten Jahrzehnten dieses Jahrhunderts wurde hin und wie-
der über verschiedene afro-brasilianische Sekten berichtet, wobei sie
jedoch fast immer als eine eher exotische Erscheinungsform einer afri-
kanischen Subkultur dargestellt wurden, als eine Folge mangelhafter
Integration der Nachkommen der Negersklaven in die brasilianische
Gesellschaft.

Nery, Bischof einer nicht näher bekannten Diözese, der als einziger
von einer *Cabula* genannten Sekte berichtet (einem der direkten Vor-
läufer der Umbanda), spricht noch vom „Einfluß der Afrikaner auf
die Brasilianer, der größer und schädlicher ist, als wir ahnten".

Sicherlich lag einer der Hauptgründe der Verfolgungen, denen sich
die afro-brasilianischen Kulturgruppen bis in jüngste Zeit ausgesetzt
sahen, in der Befürchtung, aus ihnen könnten politische oder zumindest
gesellschaftliche Feinde erwachsen. Neben den unauffälligeren wurden
deshalb diejenigen Kulte am wenigsten behelligt, die durch Übernahme
katholischer Elemente und stillschweigende oder offene Arrangements
mit der Kirche bewiesen, daß sie zur Integration bereit waren oder
sich zumindest nicht dagegen sträubten. Als Prototyp einer geduldeten

und stabil überlebenden afro-brasilianischen Sekte erschien der *Candomblé* Bahias, der von 1940 an durch wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen auch international bekannt wurde, obwohl er wahrscheinlich zu keiner Zeit die Bedeutung hatte, die ihm aufgrund dessen noch heute zugeschrieben wird. Die Werke von Bastide, Carneiro, Herskovits, Pierson, Ramos, Verger und vielen anderen weisen die engen Beziehungen zu den Religionen von Yoruba und Dahomey auf. Der Candomblé war und ist damit ein Idealfall besonders rein erhaltener afrikanischer Tradition in Brasilien; das Echo, das er erhält, steht jedoch in keinerlei Verhältnis zur geringen Zahl seiner Anhänger. Von Anfang an standen wenigstens zwei weitere große afrikastämmige Kultgruppen neben ihm, von deren Existenz zu Beginn dieses Jahrhunderts Rio, Rodrigues, Querino u.a. berichten. Die mohammedanisch orientierten waren aufgrund ihres zum Teil militanten Charakters und mangelnder Bereitschaft einer Adaptation an die katholisch-brasilianische Gesellschaft besonders intensiven Verfolgungen ausgesetzt und sind, ohne eine Spur zu hinterlassen, verschwunden. Die äußerst flexiblen Kultgruppen aus verschiedenen Bantu-Traditionen stellen jedoch die direkten Vorläufer der Umbanda dar.

Eine der wichtigsten dieser Sekten, von der die Entwicklung ihren Ausgang nahm, war die *Macumba* Rio de Janeiros. In ihr wurden, wie Gallet berichtet, zu Beginn dieses Jahrhunderts noch Geister angerufen und verkörpert, die *Ganga-Zumba, Cangira-Mungongo, Cubango* usw. hießen, die er bezeichnenderweise bereits 'Heilige' nennt und die heute vollständig vergessen sind. Ihre Anhänger wurden von denen anderer Kulte „als niedriger, Nachahmer und Ignoranten betrachtet". Diese geschmähte Eigenschaft garantierte nicht nur das Überleben der Kultgruppen, sondern führte auch zu inhaltlichen Änderungen, die sie zur Umbanda, einer — ja der brasilianischen Religion machten.

Die erwähnte Übernahme katholischer Elemente beschränkte sich zunächst im wesentlichen auf eine Liierung der Gottheiten mit Heiligen, womit eine Brücke gebaut schien zum allmählichen Hineinwachsen der Fetischisten in den katholischen (Volks-)Glauben. Die Arrangements erstreckten sich z.B. darauf, daß die Kultchefs ihre Medien und sonstigen Gläubigen zum Empfang der Sakramente anhielten, Messen lesen ließen usw.

Einige afro-brasilianische Kultgruppen erhielten dadurch zumindest

äußerlich den Charakter areligiöser rekreativer Gesellschaften der untersten sozialen Schichten. Ihre der Öffentlichkeit bekannt werdenden Riten werden in einschlägigen Veröffentlichungen als afro-brasilianische Folklore bezeichnet (*Bailados, Capoeira* u.a.m.).

Eine weitere Tatsache, die möglicherweise den Eindruck mitbestimmte, die afro-brasilianischen Sekten würden sich im Laufe der Zeit von selbst auflösen, ist, daß bis in jüngste Zeit ihre Tradition rein verbal war und niemals eine über die einzelnen Gruppen hinausgehende Autorität bestand (wenn man die persönliche Bindung jeden Kultchefs an seinen ehemaligen Chef, seinen Vater-im-Heiligen, außer Betracht läßt). Außerdem waren und sind auch heute noch die Gruppen so stark cheforientiert, daß im Gegensatz zu anderen Religionen eine Gemeinde häufig mit dem Tod ihres Priesters auseinanderbricht, weil sein aus der Gruppe hervorgehender Nachfolger nicht die notwendigen Fähigkeiten besitzt. Tatsächlich macht jedoch jeder gute Kultchef viele Kinder-im-Heiligen, von denen nur die mit geringerer Initiative nicht gleich eine neue Gruppe bilden, sondern als Nachfolger disponibel bleiben.

Jedenfalls erwies sich die Hoffnung der einflußreichen Kreise, die afro-brasilianischen Sekten würden von selbst ersatzlos verschwinden, als Irrtum. Mit der Assimilation der Nachkommen der afrikanischen Sklaven in die (luso-)brasilianische Gesellschaft erlebten ihre Institutionen vielmehr eine entsprechende soziale Aufwertung. Zunächst aus niedrigsten Schichten der (mehr oder weniger) Weißen, dann zunehmend auch aus gebildeteren Kreisen strömten nicht nur (wie eh und je und mehr oder weniger heimlich) die passiven Gläubigen, um sich von Medien in Geistrolle beraten und helfen zu lassen; aus ihnen rekrutierten sich nun auch immer größere Anteile der aktiven Gläubigen, d.h. der Medien und schließlich der Kultchefs.

Entsprechend dem Zustrom von Menschen, die von Hause aus Katholiken waren und keinerlei echte Kenntnis irgendwelcher afrikanischer Traditionen besaßen, verflachten diese allmählich auch innerhalb der Kultgruppen. Die höchste Autorität in Glaubensangelegenheiten war und ist in den bantustämmigen Kulten letztlich der Geist, d.h. das Medium in Trance. Solange die Medien afrikanischer oder afro-brasilianischer Tradition entstammten, waren die Geister afrikanische Geister. Sobald dies nicht mehr der Fall war, wurden sie zu Pseudo-Afrikanern (wie sie das brasilianische Vorurteilsschema liefert), zum Teil zu Pseudo-Indianern usw.

Als seinerzeit größte Stadt und Hauptstadt des Landes stand Rio de Janeiro im Zentrum starker Migrationsströme, mit denen Priester und Anhänger der verschiedensten afro-brasilianischen (und auch der viel weniger bekannten indio-brasilianischen) Kulte auf die Macumba stießen. So erhielten z.B. ihre Gottheiten bereits in den ersten Jahrzehnten dieses Jahrhunderts die Namen der *Orixás* des bahianischen Candomblé. Mit dem Zustrom neuer Medien kamen Elemente des Spiritismus (Allan Kardecs) hinzu, der vehement in Brasilien einbrach, Elemente des Okkultismus und in nun besonders stark anschwellendem Strom des Populärkatholizismus.

Damit war des Ende der afro-brasilianischen Macumba und der Anfang der *Umbanda* gekommen, unter deren Namen als mehr und mehr anerkannter brasilianischer Religion sich nun die verschiedenen Sekten der anderen Teile Brasiliens zusammengefunden haben, bzw. noch zusammenfinden.

Selbst die Geister aus der Kategorie der Alten Schwarzen, die am ehesten auf den Bantu-Ahnenkult verweisen, betonen, Brasilianer zu sein, und die Orixás sprechen und verstehen fließend portugiesisch und rauchen Zigarren. Die brasilianischen Farben, Grün-Gelb, tauchen auf den verschiedensten Kultgegenständen auf, die brasilianische Flagge hängt in vielen Kultstätten neben dem Altar. Geschickterweise betonen die Umbanda-Kultchefs die bestehenden stark nationalistischen Tendenzen, da sie zusätzlich ein staatliches Eingreifen zu verhindern helfen.

Die Liierung der Orixás mit den Heiligen trug nun unerwarteterweise dazu bei, daß die katholischen Gläubigen in die Umbanda-Sessionen strömten, in denen sie ihren Volksglauben offizialisiert sahen. Aufgrund dessen sah sich die Kirche in den fünfziger Jahren genötigt, offen gegen die Umbanda vorzugehen. Insbesondere Kloppenburg führte mit ebenso fundierten, wie polemischen Schriften, öffentlichen Demonstrationen von Suggestibilität und Hypnose u.dgl. einen Feldzug durch, der jedoch bald als völlig inadäquat abgebrochen wurde. Die Gründe für das Anwachsen von Kardecismus und Umbanda, die Camargo in gewisser Weise mit dem Protestantismus des 16. Jh. vergleicht, liegen zum grossen Teil im wenig orthodoxen Glauben fast der gesamten katholischen Bevölkerung Brasiliens selbst.

Bei einer Repräsentativbefragung 1966 wußten 67% der erwachsenen Einwohner Rio de Janeiros nicht, was die Heilige Dreieinigkeit ist;

52% gaben an, an den Bösen Blick zu glauben, 68%, notfalls für einen kranken Verwandten ein Spiritistenzentrum aufzusuchen.

Inzwischen besuchen in Rio de Janeiro wöchentlich mit Gewißheit mehr Gläubige Umbanda-Sessionen als Messen in katholischen Kirchen; wobei der weit überwiegende Teil beides keineswegs als unvereinbar ansieht.

Aus erstarktem Selbstbewußtsein nehmen derzeit immer mehr der ursprünglich ihren Katholizismus betonenden Kultchefs antikirchliche Haltungen ein. Versuchen neuerdings kirchliche Kreise, die Verwendung von Heiligenstatuetten und -namen als unrechtmäßig hinzustellen, weisen sie darauf hin, daß diese sowieso nur Symbolcharakter besitzen und ohne weiteres z.B. durch brasilianische Nationalhelden ersetzt werden könnten; verwehrt die Kirche Kultmitgliedern die Sakramente, erteilen sie sie selbst in entsprechenden Zeremonien; und insbesondere die selbsternannten Funktionäre und Umbanda-Theoretiker, die in wenigen Jahren hunderte von Buchtiteln auf den Markt gebracht haben und über die eine Vereinheitlichung und Stärkung der Lehre zu erwarten ist, greifen nun selbst die zunächst abträglich gewordene Betonung der afrikanischen Elemente wieder auf, um über sie eine Betonung der Eigenständigkeit und stärkere Distanzierung zu erreichen.

Derzeitige Form des Kults

Zum Teil wegen der verschiedenartigen Herkunft, zum Teil wegen der vielfältigen Einflüsse, denen sie unterliegen, sind die Kultgruppen, die sich als umbandistisch bezeichnen, in vieler Hinsicht noch sehr verschieden. Es heißt dann etwa, daß sie irgendeiner 'Linie' der Umbanda, dieser oder jener 'Nation' angehören u.dgl. Solche Bemerkungen — wie überhaupt jede verbale Aussage von Gläubigen über die Umbanda — sind mit größter Vorsicht zu betrachten; nicht selten werden Wörter ohne Rücksicht auf ihre sonst allgemein akzeptierte Bedeutung verwendet usw. Außerdem hält wohl jede Kultstätte Sessionen ab, in denen verschiedenartige Traditionen in verschiedenem Ausprägungsgrad zur Geltung kommen. Schließlich gibt es überhaupt niemals auch nur zwei Sessionen, die in den Einzelheiten des Aufbaus u.dgl. identisch wären. So gut wie jede wird, obwohl sie fest angesetzt und mit bestimmten Vorsätzen begonnen wird, weitgehend aus augenblicklichen Eingebungen der inkorporierten Geister heraus improvisiert.

Die folgenden Ausführungen basieren auf der einjährigen Beob-
achtung (1969/70) von Kultsessionen usw. in Rio de Janeiro, haupt-
sächlich auf der Governador-Insel.

In knappster Form stellen sich die in der Umbanda normalerweise
vertretene Lehre und die Kultpraxis etwa wie folgt dar: In der von
Gott (*Zambi*) geschaffenen Welt gibt es zwei Arten von Geistern; die
zu gegebener Zeit an Materie gebundenen Seelen und die reinen Geister.
Beide sind in Kategorien, Reiche und Gruppen geordnet und stehen
untereinander und zu den Dingen der materiellen Welt in vielfältiger
Beziehung.

Unabhängig von den Geistern und der Materie gibt es eine spirituelle
Energie (*Fluido*), die in einer positiven und einer negativen Form zu
mehr oder weniger großen Anteilen in allem existiert, was überhaupt
denkbar ist. Positive Energie besitzt und strömt aus alles Gute, Schöne,
Gesunde, Helle, Angenehme usw., negative entsprechend das Gegenteil.

Auch Geister haben also mehr oder weniger von diesen Energien,
wodurch sich u.a. ihr Platz in der Hierarchie bestimmt. Am höchsten
und dem absolut Positiven am nächsten stehen die katholischen Heiligen
einerseits und die Gottheiten (*Orixás*) andererseits; am tiefsten stehen
die Geister böser Menschen und die Dämonen (*Exus*), die wegen ihrer
großen Ladung an negativer Energie viel Schlechtes bringen, denen es
jedoch entsprechend auch schlecht geht — weshalb auch sie letztlich
die Tendenz zum Guten hin besitzen.

Dadurch ergibt sich für den Umbandisten die Forderung, Träger
positiver und negativer Fluiden zu erkennen (gute, bzw. schlechte
Menschen, Substanzen, Taten, Gedanken usw.), die einen zu suchen,
die anderen zu meiden. Wer sich zum Medium (*Medio, -a*) ausbilden
läßt, kann auch Gutes dadurch tun, daß er während der Kultsessionen
(*Sessão, Gira*) seinen Körper (*Aparelho*) Geistern zur Verfügung
stellt. Diese erreichen eine Vermehrung ihrer positiven Fluiden — und
damit eine Verbesserung ihrer spirituellen Situation — dadurch, daß
sie aufgrund ihrer größeren Distanz von irdischen Dingen und ihrer
Weisheit Gläubige beraten und behandeln können.

Die Kultsessionen sind diesen Zielen gewidmet. Zu ihnen wird die
Kultstätte (*Tenda, Terreiro*) von aktiven Gläubigen regelmäßig, von
passiven (*Assistência*) nur gelegentlich und besonders im Fall einer
Bedürftigkeit aufgesucht.

Der Kultraum, im Wohnhaus der Kultchefs (*Chefe de Terreiro*)

oder auch einem separaten Gebäude, entspricht im Prinzip einer katho-
lischen Kapelle. Der große, meist stufenförmig aufgebaute Altar
(*Congá*), der historisch sicherlich auf den katholischen Hausaltar zu-
rückgeht, steht voller Figuren von Heiligen (den gleichen, die auf
den kirchlichen Altären der jeweiligen Gegend stehen), von ideali-
sierten Indianern und Negern; oben in der Mitte des Altars steht in
jedem Fall ein segnender Herz-Jesus. Außer diesen Statuetten, die zum
Teil Fetische sind, befinden sich auf und unter dem Altar Kerzen und
eine kaum überschaubare Zahl verschiedenartigster geweihter Gegen-
stände und sonstiges Kultgerät.

Zwischen Altar und Chorgitter befindet sich ein relativ großer
freier Platz, auf dem sich die aktiven Mitglieder der Kultgruppe wäh-
rend der Session aufhalten und wo die Medien ihre Geister empfangen.
Für die passiven Gläubigen stehen auf wenig Platz eng einige Bänke
bereit.

Der Raum ist im allgemeinen sehr sauber und farbenfroh (z.B. mit
Blumen) geschmückt; der meist offene Dachstuhl der ärmeren Stätten
wird durch Reihen bunter Papierfähnchen verdeckt.

Es lassen sich drei Arten von Sessionen unterscheiden: Die am
meisten von Passiven besuchten Seelsorge-Sessionen (*Sessão de
Caridade*), die Medienschulung (*Sessão de Desenvolvimento*) und Fest-
sessionen verschiedenster Art, z.B. für besonders mit der Stätte ver-
bundene Geister parallel zu katholischen Feiertagen.

Allen gemeinsam sind die fröhlichen kultischen Gesänge, die von
rhythmischem Händeklatschen, seltener von Trommelrhythmen be-
gleitet werden und über die im wesentlichen der Ablauf der Session
gesteuert wird; außerdem die völlig unumgängliche Inkorporation von
Geistern.

Die Geister zeigen ein in großen Zügen genormtes Verhalten, nach
dem (zumindest in Rio de Janeiro) fünf Kategorien unterschieden
werden können: Die Orixás als Naturgottheiten oder spirituelle Chefs
von Geisterreichen, die Geister der Alten Schwarzen (*Pretos Velhos*),
gute und böse Geister mittleren Alters, die Caboclos und Exus, und
schließlich Kindergeister (*Crianças*). Alle haben bestimmte Aufgaben
und stehen gegebenfalls dem Gläubigen mit Rat und Tat zur Seite;
also nicht nur spirituell, sondern praktisch durch den Körper der Me-
dien. Ein wesentliches Moment stellt dabei die an ihm vollzogene, bzw.
die ihn gelehrte Magie dar.

Obwohl immer wieder die 'Weiße', d.h. Positivität, der Umbanda betont wird, wird zumindest in besonderen Exu-Sessionen auch destruktive Magie getrieben. Die sogenannte *Quimbanda,* die ein negativer Gegenspieler der Umbanda sein soll, ist als unabhängiger Kult mit eigenen Kultgruppen ein reines Phantasieprodukt, dessen sich die Umbandisten im Zuge ihrer Welterklärung als Sündenbock bedienen. Gelegentlich werden Quimbanda und Macumba als synonyme Wörter verwendet oder Umbandastätten nennen bestimmte ihrer Sessionen Quimbanda, weil in ihnen besonders niedere, wenig aufgeklärte Geister verkörpert werden, die sich von den Gläubigen auch für sozial nicht anerkannte Ziele einspannen lassen.

In einem Überblick seien Elemente aufgezählt, die im Rahmen des Umgangs mit Gottheiten und Geistern in der Umbanda angetroffen wurden (in Rio de Janeiro 1969/70):

Oxalá m., liiert mit Jesus Christus, wird begrüßt mit „*Epa Babá*", Zuständigkeit: Friede, Reinheit, Naturrepräsentanz: Sonne, Feuer, geweihte Farbe: Weiß, Zeichen: Kreuz, Opfergaben: z.B. Milchreis, weiße Taube auf Watte, Verhalten des Mediums: (Inkorporation sehr selten) Segenspendend.

Ogum m., St. Georg, „*Ogunhê*", Verteidigung gegen das Böse, Krieg, Eisen, Stahl, Rot, o. Grün-Rot-Weiß, Schwert, helles Bier, Schwertmangofrucht, Sanseverie, Zigarren, Geistrolle: sehr beliebt, echter oder scheinbarer Schwerttanz, bei Festen Krönung mit Helm, rotsamtener Umhang, heulender oder hicksender Ruf.

Oxum w., Sta. Maria (in verschiedenen Aspekten), „*Aiêiêu, Mama*", mütterliche Weiblichkeit, Wasserfall, Fluß, Meeresoberfläche, Blau o. Rosa, Halbmond, Sekt, Mineralwasser, gekochte Eier, Toilettenartikel, Zinn-Armreifen, Geistrolle: sehr beliebt, kreisende Handbewegungen mit Flächen nach oben, bei Festen Tanz mit Blume über den Unterarmen o. Sektkelchen auf den Händen.

Xangô m., St. Hieronymus, in junger Form: St. Johannes der Täufer, „*Cao Cabecile*", Gerechtigkeit, Wahrheit, Fels, Steinbruch, (Gewitter), Braun o. Rot-Weiß, Doppelaxt, hölzener Mörser, dunkles Bier, Quiabo (eine donnerkeilförmige Gemüsefrucht) mit Ochsenschwanz, Geistrolle: Faustschlag vor die Brust, dazu helles Heulen o. dumpfes „U!".

Iemanjá w., die Königin des Meeres, Wassermutter, Sta. Maria (in verschiedenen Aspekten) o. Sta. Rita von Cassia, „*Odofiaba*", Liebe,

Verführung, Ehe, Seefahrt, Meer, Mond, Silber, Hellblau o. Blau-Farblos, Herz, Maispudding (port. *Manjá*), Baummelone (port. *Mamão* = große Frauenbrust), Toilettenartikel, Muscheln, Meeres-schnecken, Geistrolle: eine Art Schwimmbewegungen mit nach unten offenen Händen, helles Jammern (= Sirenengeheul).

Oxosse m., St. Sebastian, „*Oquê, Oxosse*", Jagd, Fruchtbarkeit, Wald, Vegetation, Grün o. Grün-Rot, Pfeil, Pfeil und Bogen, Geist-rolle: Sehr häufig mit der Kategorie der Caboclos verquickt oder in ihr aufgegangen, tanzt mit gekreuzten Zeigefingern o. Andeutung von Bogenschießen.

Iançã w., Sta. Barbara, „*Eparrei, Iançã*", starke Bindung an Xangô, Wind, Gelb o. Golden, Dolch, Geistrolle: Selten verkörpert, wirbelnd, ungestüm, Andeutung eines gegen sich selbst gerichteten Dolches.

Omulu m., identifiziert mit Abaluaê m., St. Lazarus (St. Rochus), „*Atotô*, mein Vater", Krankheit, Tod, Friedhof, Schwarz-Weiß, häufig als spiritueller Chef der 'Seelen vom Hochkreuz' o.ä., auch in Omulus als Pendant zu den Exus aufgelöst, Geistrolle: selten, Kopf gesenkt und verhüllt.

Nanã Buruquê (auch noch *Burucu*) w., geht historisch nicht auf einen Yoruba-Orisha zurück, sondern auf den Dahomey-Schöpfergott Nana-Buluku, Sta. Anna, „*Essaluba, Nanã*", alt und in enger Be-ziehung zu Omulu, Regen, Meeresgrund, Lila, Geistrolle: selten, ge-bückt, wie mit tief hängenden Armen Wasser schöpfend.

Kinder (auch *Ibêjc* o. *Erê* genannt) m.u.w., Geister verstorbener Kinder, gehen historisch auf den Orisha der Zwillinge zurück, daher noch bestehende Liierung mit St. Cosmas und St. Damian, „*Onibejada*", Hellblau-Rosa o. Bunt, Limonade, Süßigkeiten, europäisches Obst, Spielzeug, Geistrolle: kindlich-distanzlos, fröhlich, laut, auch weinend, Zischen zwischen geschlossenen Zähnen (weist auf Verbindung zu Exus hin).

Exus m.u.w. (auch noch Exu m. als Orixá), Geister schlechter Er-wachsener o. Dämonen, Teufel, seltener St. Antonius, „*Exu iê*", „be-sitzen wenig Licht und viel Kraft", Schwarze Magie, Wegkreuzungen, Friedhof usw., Rot-Schwarz, Dreizack, m.: Schnaps u. Zigarren, w.: Anislikör u. Zigaretten, rohes Fleisch, Maniokgrieß, w.: faule Eier, schwarzer Hahn, schwarzer Ziegenbock, w.: rote Rosen, Geistrolle: Verhängen des Altars, scheuen Kreuze, oft rot-schwarze Sonderklei-dung, aggressiv, dreist, unberechenbar, trinken Schnaps, unfrohes Lachen bei geschlossenen Zähnen.

Caboclos m.u.w., Geister guter Erwachsener, bes. von Indianerhäupt-lingen, über Oxosse: „*Oquê, Caboclo*", Wein, Zigarren, Zahnkette, Geistrolle: hoheitsvoll-steif o. federnd, Passes, Rauchbehandlung, oft mit Federbusch geschmückt, echte Indianerwaffen, laute Schreie z.B. „Ijöh!", „Hua!"

Alte Schwarze m.u.w., Geister guter u. schlechter Greise, bes. von afro-brasilianischen Kultchefs, „Verehrt die Seelen" o.ä., Schwarz-Weiß-Pepita, Süßwein, alkoholische Kräuteraufgüsse, Kaffee, Pfeife, Rollentabak, Perlhuhn, Rosenkranz, Kette mit Amuletten, Kreuz und Feige, Geistrolle: Sitzen auf Bänkchen, beschwerliches Gehen, liebens-wert-vertraulich, Schicksalbefragung durch Würfel u. Wasserglas, Ge-sundbeten, Magie, bes. Gegenmagie.

Fetische, Opfer, magische Präparationen

Die Geister bewegen sich unabhängig vom Raum, sind jedoch in bestimmten Teilen der Natur sozusagen beheimatet. Wichtigste Auf-enthaltsorte der in der Umbanda (Rio de Janeiros) verehrten und ver-körperten Geister sind das Meer (*Calunga grande*), der Strand, der Wald (*Macaia*), der Friedhof (*Calunga pequena*), die Wegkreuzungen u.a. Dabei handelt es sich also für die 'adäquaten Orte' zur Übergabe von Opfern u. dgl.

So wie die Geister in den Körper eines Menschen eindringen können, und zwar in erster Linie, wenn ihnen dazu besondere Gelegenheit ge-geben wird und sie dazu aufgefordert werden, können sie auch daran gewöhnt werden, sich vorzugsweise an bestimmten Stellen oder in be-stimmten Gegenständen aufzuhalten.

Fast vollends sicher wird ihre spirituelle Anwesenheit, wenn ihnen in einer spirituellen Weihezeremonie ein bestimmter Gegenstand zu-geordnet wird und ihnen von da an vor diesem Gegenstand regel-mäßig Träger positiver Energien (in erster Linie brennende Kerzen) und andere von ihnen vorgezogene Dinge deponiert werden.

Solche Fetische können im Prinzip aus irgendetwas bestehen und irgendeine Form haben. Es lassen sich drei Arten unterscheiden: Ein-fache Gegenstände wie Steine, Erzbrocken, Muscheln, Indianerwaffen u.dgl.; Heiligen- und andere Statuetten aus industrieller Seriefeti-gung oder selbst geschnitzte oder modellierte Figuren, bei denen in der Regel angenommen wird, daß es sich um die Darstellung eines Me-

diums handelt; Gefäße mit oder ohne Deckel, die mit verschiedensten 'adäquaten' Flüssigkeiten und Substanzen gefüllt werden.

Der Fachausdruck für die Fetische ist *Assentamento*, was sowohl etwa 'Festsetzung', als auch 'Vertrag' heißt. Über sie gewinnt der Besitzer eine gewisse Macht über den Geist, er übernimmt jedoch auch andererseits die Verpflichtung zu entsprechender Behandlung.

Will man einen Fetisch aus irgendeinem Grund loswerden, z.B. weil er zerbrochen ist, weil der Geist den von ihm erwarteten Dienst erledigt hat usw., so genügt es, wenn man ihn mit einer lezten ausreichenden Speisung am adäquaten Ort aussetzt.

Besonders wichtig ist die Festsetzung von Exus, den unberechenbaren, auch Böses tuenden Geistern, und zwar insbesondere die des persönlichen Exu. Umbanda-Kultstätten und die Wohnstätten von Umbanda-Priestern erkennt man in der Regel am Exuhäuschen neben dem Eingang. In ihnen wird ein Exu-Fetisch aufbewahrt und umsorgt, wodurch er zum Türhüter wird, der von außen kommendes Böses und besonders fremde Exus abwehrt.

In jeder Umbanda-Kultstätte gibt es Dutzende von Fetischen, die Geister des Hauses, der Kultstätte, der Gruppe, des Chefs, der Medien betreffen. Sie stehen zum Teil unter dem Altar oder in einem besonderen Fetischraum (*Camarim*) verborgen, zum Teil offen an verschiedensten Stellen herum.

Aktive Umbandisten, die eine besonders intensive Beziehung zu den spirituell mit ihnen persönlich verbundenen Geistern aufgenommen haben, unter ihnen insbesondere die Medien, Priester und Kultchefs, müssen in regelmäßigen Abständen größere Verpflichtungsopfer machen. Zum Teil geschieht das gemeinschaftlich durch die ganze Kultgruppe bei Festsessionen unter freiem Himmel. Ein umbandistisches Standard-Opfer besteht aus einer Tuchunterlage, Kerzen, Rauchwaren mit Streichhölzern, Getränken mit Gefäß zum Trinken, farbigen Bändern, seltener ist es ein Topf mit Essen, ein getötetes Huhn, für weibliche Geister Blumen, Kosmetikartikel, für Kinder billigstes Spielzeug usw.

Was und wo zu opfern ist, wird häufig sehr detailliert von inkorporierten Geistern bestimmt. Gewisse Einzelheiten der Opfer sind über die verschiedenen Kultstätten hinweg bestimmten Geistern, besonders den Orixás, spezifisch, so daß der Eingeweihte ohne weiteres erkennen kann, an wen, zumindest an welche Geisterkategorie sie gerichtet sind.

Nicht selten werden die Opfer von Zetteln begleitet, die Namen, auch Anschrift des Gläubigen tragen, weniger häufig werden Wunschlisten, Gebetszettel oder regelrechte Briefe an den betreffenden Geist beigelegt. Eine an 49 Wunschzetteln durchgeführte Untersuchung zeigte, daß es sich darin um übliche Probleme der brasilianischen Gesellschaft handelt, deren positive Lösung angestrebt wird; und zwar bezeichnenderweise auch in den Opfern an 'böse' Geister. In vier Fällen wird der Wunsch nach Schädigung eines Dritten geäußert.

Das Opfern wird auch Heilung oder Problemlösung suchenden Gelegenheitsbesuchern umbandistischer Kultstätten empfohlen. Das führt dazu, daß bestimmte Stellen Rio de Janeiros — und zwar besonders reizvoll gelegene Plätze — zu wahren Opfer-Müllplätzen geworden sind, sofern sie nicht regelmäßig von der Stadtreinigung bearbeitet werden. Sobald die Kerzen verloschen sind, eine Flutwelle darüber hinweggegangen, der Morgentau darauf gefallen ist o.ä., können die Opfer respektvoll weggeräumt werden, ohne daß sich ein Geist dadurch geschädigt oder beleidigt fühlt. Es gibt Umbandisten, die regelmäßig Operstätten nach leeren Flaschen, Geschirr und ähnlichen brauchbaren Gegenständen absuchen. Im Gegensatz zu der Masse der nicht-eingeweihten, nichtsdestoweniger ebenso geistergläubigen Brasilianer wissen sie allerdings auch, die Geister gegebenenfalls um Genehmigung zu ihrem Tun zu bitten, und sie können die Opfer von Präparationen Schwarzen Magie unterscheiden. Für den 'gegengläubigen' Brasilianer ist alles, was mit der Umbanda zu tun hat, '*Macumba*' oder '*Despacho*' und damit verderbensträchtig.

Die Umbanda kennt keinen Unterschied zwischen religiöser und magischer Praktik, lediglich zwischen Weißer und Schwarzer Magie. Zur Schwarzen Magie werden weniger aufgeklärte Geister eingespannt (im wesentlichen Exus) und stärkere Mittel angewendet (d.h. teurere, zeitaufwendigere, ekel- oder abscheuerregende usw.). In scheinbar rein religiösen Opfern finden sich 'magische' Elemente, z.B. in der Bedeutungsträchtigkeit des Aufbaus; alle scheinbar 'rein magischen' Präparationen implizieren die Mithilfe von Geistern und Gottheiten, wie z.B. aus verwendeten farbigen Bändern und bestimmten Materialien hervorgeht (ganz zu schweigen von den dabei vorgenommenen Anrufungen, die sich auch schriftlich dokumentiert finden).

In der Schwarzen Magie finden Grobsalz, Stecknadeln, Stoffpuppen (*bruxas*), Totenköpfchen aus Plastik, Fotos usw. Anwendung, es wer-

den gelegentlich auch — als besonders verwerflich empfunden und deshalb besonders wirksam — Tiere zu Tode gequält.

Auch normal entstehender Kultmüll, der z.B. aus abgenutzten oder zerbrochenen Kultgegenständen, Kerzenresten u.dgl. besteht, wird ins Freie geschafft. Hinzu kommen sogenannte Übergaben an Gottheiten und Geister, die sozusagen aus deren persönlichem Eigentum bestehen, das ihnen spirituell übergeben werden muß, wenn das Medium stirbt oder die weitere Verkörperung aus sonstigen Gründen unterbleibt. Bei der Auflösung von Kultstätten kann u.U. fast das gesamte Inventar 'adäquat' beseitigt werden.

Inkorporation und Geistrollen

Auf besondere Anzeichen hin wird Besuchern der Umbanda von inkorporierten Geistern geraten, sich zum Medium ausbilden zu lassen. Wenn sie das selbst akzeptieren und der Kultchef der Meinung ist, daß sie für seine Gruppe geeignet sind, frequentieren sie zunächst die sogenannten Entwicklungssessionen. Darin versuchen inkorporierte Geister und Gehilfen mit verschiedenen psychologischen Mitteln, sie in Trance zu bringen und die autonome Erreichung dieses Zustands einzuüben. Parallel dazu werden die Geistrollen aufgebaut; der nach Ansicht der Umbandisten in Trance anstelle der Seele in den Körper eindringende Geist muß lernen, diesen zu beherrschen und durch ihn das von ihm erwartete angepaßte Verhalten zu zeigen.

Außerdem werden selbstverständlich vom Kultchef theoretische Traditionen, Lebensweisheiten u.dgl. weitergegeben.

Schon bald nehmen die Neulinge auch an den sonstigen Sessionen aktiv teil, sei es als Gehilfen, sei es, daß es ihnen gelingt, zu den vorgesehenen Zeitpunkten in Trance zu fallen und zumindest in Ansätzen das Verhalten eines Geists aus der gerade gerufenen Kategorie zu zeigen. In gut geführten Kultstätten werden gleichzeitig in der Regel nur Geister einer einzigen Kategorie, bei den Orixás sogar nur Einzelwesen (allerdings in mehreren Medien) zugelassen. Wenngleich die Geister so gut wie immer mit viel Rücksicht, Geduld und Respekt behandelt werden, gibt es doch Mittel, sie nötigenfalls mehr oder weniger sanft auszutreiben.

Im Normalfall werden sie durch entsprechende Gesänge gerufen und auch wieder fortgeschickt. Nicht selten sind zehn, zwanzig und mehr

Medien auf kleinstem Raum von einem ihrer Geister besessen; sie stehen schwankend umher, gehen oder tänzeln hin und her, begrüßen sich gegenseitig, die Honoratioren, ihnen bekannte Besucher usw. mit typischen Rufen und Gesten. In Seelsorge-Sessionen ist den passiven Besuchern Gelegenheit gegeben, den inneren Kultraum-Teil zu betreten und sich mit den inkorporierten Geistern zu unterhalten und sich von ihnen (z.B. mit Passes) behandeln zu lassen. Nötigenfalls, z.B. wenn die manierierte Sprechweise nicht verstanden wird, stehen Gehilfen und gerade nicht besessene Medien hilfreich zur Verfügung.

Diese kümmern sich auch um den Geist, zünden die bei vielen obligatorische Zigarre oder Pfeife an, wischen den Schweiß vom Gesicht usw.

Es gibt nicht eigentlich eine umbandistische Sondersprache, vielmehr sprechen die Medien in Trance so, wie sich ein Brasilianer vorstellt, daß der betreffende Geist zu Lebzeiten gesprochen hat — also meist ein irgendwie korrumpiertes Portugiesisch. Dabei werden nur verhältnismäßig wenige fremde Wörter untergemischt, die zum Teil unverständlich und unverstanden sind, zum Teil anstelle von portugiesischen verwendet werden (z.B. *Marafo* oder *Oti* = Schnaps, *Fundanga* oder *Tuia* = Schießpulver).

Das Verhalten der neuen inkorporierten Geister entspricht dem bei anderen beobachteten, den Erklärungen und Korrekturen des Kultchefs und anderer und schließlich den Möglichkeiten und Ansichten der Menschen, die sie verkörpern. Es lassen sich sehr deutlich gruppeninterne Entwicklungen beobachten, und untereinander 'verwandte' Gruppen sind äußerlich an der Ähnlichkeit der Geistrollen zu erkennen. Ein Zusammenhalt zwischen einzelnen Kultgruppen, die sich ansonsten vollständig auseinanderleben würden, ist durch gelegentliche Freundschaftsbesuche in anderen Stätten gegeben und dadurch, daß die Leute, ehe sie zu Medien wurden und auch als Medien, gelegentlich fremde Stätten aufsuchen.

Jeder Mensch ist mindestens einem (oder einem männlichen und einem weiblichen) Geist jeder Kategorie spirituell besonders verbunden. Diese Geister sind es, die während der Entwicklung mit immer größerer Exklusivität verkörpert werden; dabei gibt es selbstverständlich persönliche Vorlieben, z.B. steuert ein Kultchef das Geschehen am liebsten über seinen Caboclo, der andere über seinen Alten Schwarzen. Jedenfalls werden in der Umbanda — obwohl es sich zum überwiegenden

Teil um Geister verstorbener Menschen handeln soll — fast nie histo-
rische oder gar persönlich bekannte Tote verkörpert. (Eine Ausnahme
bildet z.B. Pater Cicero aus Juazeiro, Ceará, der sich bereits zu Leb-
zeiten als Heiligen feiern ließ und nun als Geist in den Umbanda-Stät-
ten Recifes weiterhin Wunder tut).

Die Namen der Geister

Obwohl die Orixás in einem Teil der Kultstätten als Irradiationen
und kosmische Kräfte der Natur o.ä. verstanden werden und folglich
während der Inkorporation keinen besonderen sozialen Kontakt mit
den Gruppenmitgliedern pflegen, werden sie auch dann in gewisser
Weise personifiziert gedacht. Es wird also zwar angenommen, daß
mehrere Medien gleichzeitig vom selben Orixá besessen sein können,
trotzdem erhalten sie oft persönliche Beinamen. Diese sind in stärker
dem Candomblé zuneigenden Kultstätten wahrscheinlich afrikanischen
Ursprungs (*Ogum Bonungé, Oxosse Matualém*), in Kultstätten, in
denen die Orixás bereits weitgehend zu Caboclos geworden sind, por-
tugiesisch (Ogum Meeresstrand, Oxosse Buschbrecher). Solche Bei-
namen besitzen jedoch für die beobachtbare Realität des Kults fast
keine Bedeutung.

Anders ist das bei den vier übrigen Kategorien. Hier sind die einzel-
nen Geister den Gläubigen häufig mit dem persönlichen Namen be-
kannt, sie werden auch in Liedern häufig persönlich angesprochen —
im Gegensatz zu den Aspekten der einzelnen Orixás. In einer Unter-
suchung wurden 803 Namen zusammengestellt, die sich Medien in
Geistrolle gaben; 258 Caboclos, 208 Alte Schwarze, 182 Exus, 155
Kinder. Die Anzahlen charakterisieren, nebenbei gesagt, die Beliebt-
heit der Geister bei den Medien.

Caboclo heißt in der Umbanda im wesentlichen 'Geist eines außer-
halb der brasilianischen Zivilisation geborenen Indios'. Entsprechend
sind die Namen der Caboclos zum beträchtlich überwiegenden Teil 'In-
dianernamen'. 83,7% sind oder bestehen aus portugiesischen Wörtern,
z.B. Tier- und Pflanzennamen, Pfeil, Feder, Stern, Stein; 57,8% sind
Doppelwörter, wobei die Farben Weiß und Grün und die Zahl Sieben
überwiegen. Unter den nicht-portugiesischen Wörtern sind Roman-
figuren der indianistischen Literatur, Orts- und Stammesbezeichnungen
wiederzuerkennen. Zu den beliebtesten Caboclo-Namen gehören: Ju-

rema (Baumart), Ochsentreiber, Baumstumpf-Ausreißer, Korallen-
schlange, Weißfeder, Siebenpfeil, Bogenschütze.

Die Namen der Alten Schwarzen setzen sich in ihrer vollständigen
Form aus einem Titel, einem Vor- und einem Beinamen zusammen. So
gut wie immer besteht der Titel aus einer Verwandtschaftsbezeichnung:
Bei den weiblichen sind 53% Oma, 34% Tante, bei den männlichen
83% Vater. Interessanterweise gibt es nicht eine einzige Alte Schwarze,
die 'Mutter' genannt würde. Bei den Hauptnamen handelt es sich bei
83,1% um christliche Vornamen (36,3% aller weiblichen Alten nennen
sich Maria). Die Beinamen sind meist Zuordnungen zu Geister-'Natio-
nen' oder 'Linien' (von Angola, von den Seelen u.dgl.). Nur ein
einziger Name (0,5%) ist rein afrikanischen Ursprungs, nämlich *Gan-
gazumba*. Zu den beliebtesten Namen Alter Schwarzer gehören: Vater
Joachim, Oma Maria Conga, Oma Katharina, Vater Benedikt, Tante
Maria.

Die Exus lieben es, in ihren Namen ihre Schrecklichkeit unter Be-
weis zu stellen, durch ihren Wirkungsort, ihre Taten, furcherregendes
Aussehen, korrumpierten Charakter. Dabei verwenden 91,2% Namen
ohne jeden Anklang an afrikanische Elemente, nur 8,2% rein afrika-
nische Namen (*Tiriri, Zumbi* u.a.). Der afrikanische Name *Bambon-
jira* ist in der Form *Pomba Gira* (= etwa 'Rundentaube') zur Bezeich-
nung weiblicher Exus geworden. Zu den beliebtesten Namen von Exus
zählen: Straßenschließer, Rundentaube, Sieben Kreuzwege, Toten-
kopf, Maria Lump.

Die Kindernamen sind eindeutig als solche zu erkennen, sie tragen
meist die Diminutivendung. 76,1% sind christliche Vornamen, ein ein-
ziger Name (*Doum* 12,9%) erinnert an Afrika. Zu den beliebtesten
Namen gehören: Mariechen, Cosmas. Damian, Hänschen, Peterchen.

Zusammengefaßt haben 696 (= 86,7%) der Namen keinerlei An-
klang an afrikanische Elemente, 32 (= 3,9%) keinerlei Anklang an
nicht-afrikanische Elemente. 317 (= 39,5%) sind oder enthalten
christliche Vornamen, 216 (= 26,9%) sind oder enthalten Namen von
Tieren, Pflanzen und anderen Naturelementen. 35,3% aller weiblichen
Geister nannten sich Maria (bzw. Mariechen).

Die magischen Siegel

Die Umbanda-Geister besitzen zum Teil persönliche Siegel (*Pontos
riscados*), die aus einer meist symmetrischen Zusammenstellung ein-

facher Zeichen bestehen (Kreuz, Stern, Kreis, Pfeil, Herz usw.). Die
Einzelteile haben, zumindest in der Regel einsehbare Beziehungen zu
Orixás, Naturreichen der Geister u.ä. Diese Siegel stellen eine Art
Namenszeichen dar, sie werden deshalb gelegentlich von den inkorpo-
rierten Geistern zum Zeichen und zur Bekräftigung ihre Anwesenheit
mit geweihter Kreide (*Pemba*) auf den Boden geschrieben. Dazu stel-
len sie oft eine Kerze (welche Licht = positive Energie ausstrahlt) und
ein Glas Wasser (zur Neutralisierung negativer Fluiden), seltener
werden fremde Bestandteile einkomponiert, z.B. ein Rosenkranz. Die
Siegel dienen auch dazu, den Geist zu berufen, und sie können dann im
Sinne eines Fetisches gebraucht werden. Es gibt Kultchefs, die darauf
spezialisiert sind, Geister, die sie als Verursacher von Krankheit oder
anderem Übel erkannt haben, vorübergehend in ihrer Kultstätte fest-
zusetzen: Mit roter Kreide zeichnen sie ihr Siegel auf den Boden,
befestigen ein zusammengefaltetes Papier mit dem Namen des betref-
fenden Menschen mit Wachs darauf und stellen Kerzen, Schnaps und
andere Opfergaben hinzu. Solange die Geister nun an dieser Stelle gut
bewirtet werden, besitzen sie keinen Grund, sich zu entfernen und den
Menschen zu belästigen.

In entsprechendem Glauben werden die Siegel guter Geister in Amu-
letten verwendet.

Es genügt im übrigen offenbar, wenn der Kultchef ein Siegel zeich-
net, das ihm bei der Anrufung gerade einfällt; dieses wird dann als
dem betreffenden Geist gehörend angesehen.

Die kultischen Gesänge

Die Umbanda-Geister besitzen persönliche Lieder (*Pontos cantados*),
mit denen sie gerufen werden können und die ihre Anwesenheit in der
Kultstätte begleiten und bekräftigen. Sie werden jeweils zum ersten
Mal von den inkorporierten Geistern selbst gesungen und sind nur zu
sehr geringem Grade traditionell. Es gibt auch auf Gruppen oder ganze
Kategorien bezogene Lieder, die z.B. für neue oder unbedeutende
Geister oder bei pauschalen Anrufungen gesungen werden.

Die Lieder sind in der Regel verständlich, d.h. in portugiesischer
Sprache abgefaßt. Die Texte sind äußerst kurz, zwei-, vier-, höchstens
sechszeilig und werden dementsprechend mehrmals, oft viele Dutzend
Mal hintereinander wiederholt. Sie besitzen so gut wie nie einen reli-
giösen Inhalt, sondern sind kinderliedartig, nicht selten extrem banal.

Es gibt daneben Lieder, mit denen die Geister aufgefordert werden, sich wieder zurückzuziehen, außerdem solche, die kultische Zeremonien in Abwesenheit der Geister begleiten. Nur wenige sind von einer Kultstätte zur anderen gleich, geschweige denn identisch; andererseits werden aber z.B. in Salvador, Bahia, Lieder gesungen, die manchen ähnlich sind, die man in Rio hören kann usw. Einige Beispiele sollen einen Eindruck von den liturgischen Gesängen der Umbanda geben:

Sessionseröffnung; *"Encruza, encruza o terreiro, encruza/na fé de Oxalá encruza"*. = Kreuze (d.h. weihe) den Platz/ im Glauben Oxalás kreuze. (In folgenden Strophen werden andere Orixá-Namen eingesetzt).

Prostration vor dem Altar: *"Você que é filho de pemba/ você que é filho de fé/ bate com a cabeça/e pede a Zambi o que quiser"*. = Du, der du Sohn von Pemba (magische Kreide) bist/du, der du Sohn im Glauben bist/ Schlag deinen Kopf/ Und bitte Zambi (Gott), was du willst.

Beräucherung: *"Nossa Senhora defumou seus bentos filhos/ defumou seus bentos filhos p'ra cheirar/ eu defumo êste congá/ p'ro mal sair e o bem entrar"*. = Unsere Liebe Frau beräucherte ihre geweihten Kinder/sie beräucherte ihre geweihten Kinder, damit sie duften/ ich beräuchere diesen Congá (Altar)/ damit das Böse hinausgeht und das Gute hereinkommt.

Gebetsgesang: *"Oxalá é nosso pai/ Iemanjá é nossa mãe/ Senhor que é dono dêste mundo/ e de outros mundos também/ pedimos licença a Oxalá/ na hora de Jesus, amem"*. = Oxalá ist unser Vater/ Iemanjá ist unsere Mutter/ Herr, dem die Welt gehört/ und andere Welten auch/ wir bitten Oxalá um Erlaubnis/ in der Stunde Jesu, Amen.

Magische Therapie: „*São João Baptista vem, minha gente/ vem chegando de Aruanda/ salve o povo côr de rosa/ salve os filhos de Umbanda*". = Sankt Johannes der Täufer kommt, liebe Leute/ er kommt aus Aruanda (gelobtes Land, Himmel) an/ salve, rosafarbenes Volk/ salve, Söhne der Umbanda.

Ruflied Ogum: „*Beira-mar, auê Beira-mar/ Ogum já jurou bandeira/ no campo de Humaitá/ Ogum já venceu demanda/ vamos todos saravâ*". = Meeresstrand, aue Meeresstrand / Ogum hat schon auf die Fahne geschworen/ auf dem Feld von Humaitá (Krieg Brasilien: Paraguay (1864-1870)/Ogum hat schon den Streit gewonnen/ laßt uns alle saravâ (korrumpierte Verbalform von salve).

Fortschicklied Ogum: „*Ogum, sela seu cavalo/ São Miguel lhe chama/ está chegando a hora/ filhos de Umbanda, porque é que chora/ lá se vai Ogum, êle vai embora*". = Ogum, sattle dein Pferd/ Sankt Michael ruft/ Es wird Zeit/ Söhne der Umbanda, warum weint ihr/ Da geht Ogum, er geht weg.

Ruflied Iemanjá: „*Iemanjá é uma linda sereia/ que fica na areia/ no fundo do mar*" = Iemanjá ist eine schöne Sirene/ die im Sand liegt/ auf dem Meeresboden.

Ruflied Caboclo Ochsentreiber: „*Quem vem lá, sou eu/ boiadeiro eu sou*". = Wer da kommt, bin ich/ ich bin Ochsentreiber.

Ruflied Exu: „*Exu que tem duas cabeças/ êle olha a sua banda com fé/ uma é Satanas do inferno/ a outra é de Jesus Nazaré*". = Exu, der zwei Köpfe hat/ schaut zuversichtlich auf seine Gruppe/ einer ist Satan der Hölle/ der andere ist von Jesus Nazareth.

Ruflied Alte Schwarze: „*Na Bahia corre agua sem chuver/ agua de coco é bom/ eu também quero beber*". = In Bahia fließt Wasser, ohne zu regnen/ Kokoswasser ist gut/ ich will auch trinken.

Fortschicklied Alte Schwarze: „*Adeus, meus Pretos Velhos/ quando precisar, eu chamo/ Zambi lhe trouxe, Zambi vai lhe levar/ dá bença, meus Pretos Velhos queridos/ benza a congá*". = Ade, meine Alten Schwarzen/ wenn es nötig ist, rufe ich/ Zambi hat euch gebracht, Zambi wird euch mitnehmen/ gebt Segen, meine geliebten Alten Schwarzen/ segnet den Congá (Altar).

Die Melodien, zu denen diese Lieder gesungen werden, sind recht flott und für jemanden, der mit brasilianischer Musik vertraut ist, angenehm und eingängig. Die begleitenden Rhythmen sollen einzelnen Orixás und Geisterkategorien spezifisch sein und außerdem in vier verschiedenen Systemen existieren. Die Kultmusiker sind in der Regel nicht gleichzeitig Medien, oft nicht einmal an eine bestimmte Gruppe gebunden. Es werden ausschließlich Perkussionsinstrumente verwendet.

Schlußbemerkung

Die Umbanda besitzt keinerlei zentrale Organisation (Konföderatiotionen u.dgl. versuchen nachträglich, in großer Zahl und sich bekämpfend, einen gewissen Einfluß auf die einzelnen Stätten zu gewinnen); sie ist spontan ohne Stifter entstanden; ein Missionsgedanke ist ihr völlig fremd, da sie in äußerster Toleranz behauptet, letztlich seien alle Religionen richtig. Es fehlt der Umbanda absolut jedes kämpferische

Moment; sie ist allen Einflüssen offen und deshalb in geradezu idealer Weise an die Vorurteile, Meinungen und Glaubensinhalte der Brasilianer angepaßt. Charakteristisch ist die Reaktion sowohl von Umbandisten, wie von Nicht-Umbandisten auf die Feststellung, daß der Autor Umbanda-Sessionen besuchte; die einen fragten freudig, die anderen verwundert, ob ihm das gefällt (!), also nicht etwa, ob er denn auch glaubt o.dgl.

Da jedoch aus reiner Anpassung nichts Neues entstehen kann, besteht die Frage, wieso die Umbanda weitgehend an die Stelle des stärker an die Kirche gebundenen Volkskatholizismus treten konnte und zum Teil sogar in Konkurrenzstellung zur katholischen Kirche selbst geraten ist. Offenbar muß sie Funktionen erfüllen, die die Kirche nicht erfüllt, oder nicht erfüllen kann. Der Ansatzpunkt aller diesbezüglichen Überlegungen hat bei der normierten und institutionalisierten Besessenheit zu liegen.

Über sie ist der Gegensatz zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits aufgehoben; das angeblich Übernatürliche ist in die Natürlichkeit, in die Natur integriert. Der Gläubige bedarf keines Mittlers mehr, kaum noch des Gebets, da er in direkten Kontakt und echten Dialog mit den spirituellen Wesen treten kann. Insbesondere für die Medien schafft die Besessenheit eine fast unerschütterliche Glaubensgewißheit; mit ihnen über die Realität der Geister diskutieren zu wollen, entspricht etwa der In-Frage-Stellung ihrer eigenen Existenz.

Aufgrund mangelnder Dogmatik befinden sich die Aussagen der inkorporierten Geister stets auf der Höhe des derzeitigen populären Wissens; sie spiegeln ununterbrochen die Hoffnungen, Erwartungen und Befürchtungen der sich bei ihnen beratenden Gläubigen wider und wirken aufgrund ihres Geschicks und der einzig dastehenden Autorität intensiv und im Sinne der jeweiligen eigenen Persönlichkeit in die Lebensführung. Camargo bemerkt, daß „so paradox es zunächst erscheinen mag, bilden die mediunistischen Religionen ... einen Ausdruck des relativen Prozesses der Rationalisierung und Säkularisation".

Während der Sessionen herrscht im allgemeinen eine lockere, fast heitere Stimmung, die geradezu an ein Familienfest erinnern kann. Der direkte Kontakt zu den für jenseitig gehaltenen Wesen schafft eine oft kollegiale oder familiäre Beziehung zu ihnen, die z.B. in den Anredeformen „Mein Vater", „Oma", „Gevatter", „Brüderchen" usw. ihren Ausdruck findet. Nicht selten wird in den Sessionen (auch von Gei-

stern) gewitzelt und fröhlich gelacht. Mit ihrer Musik und dem bunten Treiben wirkt die Session unterhaltend auch für den, der im einzelnen nicht versteht oder den nicht interessiert, um was es eigentlich geht.

In der Umbanda wird niemals von Sünde, sondern stets nur von Problemen gesprochen, so gut wie nie vom Tod und Geschehnissen danach. Wohl jeder Umbandist sieht die Existenzberechtigung seiner Religion (und darunter versteht er im wesentlichen die Berufung und Verkörperung von Gottheiten und Geistern) in der Seelsorge, der *Caridade*. So kommen zu den Sessionen unerfahrene Mütter mit ihren Säuglingen und lassen sich von einer inkorporierten Alten Schwarzen ein Hustenmittel verschreiben, ebenso wie Gesetzesbrecher, die einen Exu festsetzen lassen wollen. Wobei jeder Rat, jede Anweisung, jede Entscheidung wohlgemerkt als nicht von den Priestern und Medien, sondern von Gottheiten und Geistern ausgehend betrachtet wird.

Über die offen und wie selbstverständlich empfohlenen und durchgeführten magischen Praktiken, von denen eine Fülle in verschiedenen Graden der Indikation und Wirksamkeit besteht, die immer neu erfunden und adaptiert werden, erreicht die Umbanda eindeutige Erfolge psycho- und sozialhygienischer und -therapeutischer Art. Insbesondere aber die Identifikation der Medien in Trance mit den verkörperten Wesenheiten hat hervorragende kathartische Wirkungen.

Die Umbanda wirkt sich so nicht nur (oder vielleicht sogar weniger) auf die Lebensführung aus, sondern auf das Welt- und Selbstverständnis, das Selbstwertgefühl und die angepaßte Integration des Gläubigen in die aktuelle brasilianische Realität.

LITERATURAUSWAHL
(nicht-umbandistische Autoren)

AZEVEDO, T. de: Catholicism in Brazil, A Personal Evolution in Thought, New York 1953.

BASTIDE, R.: Les Religions Africaines au Brésil, Paris 1960.

BRACKMANN, R. W.: Der Umbanda-Kult in Brasilien, in: Staden-Jahrbuch 7/8, S. 157-173, São Paulo 1959/60.

CAMARGO, C. P. F. de: Cardecismo e Umbanda, Uma interpretação sociológica, São Paulo 1961.

CARNEIRO, E.: Ladinos e Crioulos (Kap.: As encruzilhadas de Exu), Rio de Janeiro 1964.

——. Antologia do Negro Brasileiro (Kap.: Religiões), Rio de Janeiro 1967.

CORRÊA, M.: O Sertão Carioca (Kap.: A macumba), Rio de Janeiro 1936.

FIGGE, H. H.: 'Besessenheit' als Therapie, Zur Wirkung der 'Geisterbeschwörung' auf 'Inkorporationsmedien' in der Umbanda, in: Z. f. Parapsychol. u. Grenzgeb. d. Psychol. 12, S. 207-225, Freiburg i. Br. 1970.

FISCHER, U.: Zur Liturgie des Umbandakultes, Eine Untersuchung zu den Kult-riten oder Amtshandlungen der synkretischen Neureligion der Umbanda in Brasilien, Beih. Z. f. Religions- u. Geistesgesch. XIII, Leiden 1970.

KLOPPENBURG, B.: A Umbanda no Brasil, Orientação para os Católicos, Petrópolis RJ. 1961.

WEINGÄRTNER, L.: Umbanda, Synkretistische Kulte in Brasilien, Eine Heraus-forderung für die christliche Kirche, Erlangen 1969.

LE SERPENT, LE NŒUD D'HERCULE ET LE CADUCÉE D'HERMÈS.

SUR UN PASSAGE ORPHIQUE CHEZ ATHÉNAGORE.

PAR

R. FERWERDA

Ede, Holland

"Quand Rhéa, la mère de Zeus, se refusa à se marier avec Zeus, il la poursuivit et quand elle se transforma en un serpent, il se changea lui-même aussi en un serpent et après l'avoir liée avec le nœud nommé d'Hercule, il s'unit à elle (le caducée d'Hermès est une réplique de la forme de cette union). Ensuite, après l'avoir violée, il s'unit à sa fille Perséphone, aussi sous la forme d'un serpent. Elle lui enfanta Dionysos. Quel est le caractère bon et auguste de cette histoire pour que nous croyions que Kronos, Zeus et les autres sont des dieux?" [1]

En lisant ce passage on se demande si la manière dont Athénagore attaque ce mythe, y rend tout à fait justice. Certes, d'un point de vue moral, il a peut-être raison de douter du caractère auguste d'une histoire où les dieux se transforment en serpents et où le fils fait violence à sa mère et le père à sa fille. Mais il me semble que c'est là seulement la surface d'un mythe ancien qui, examiné un peu de plus près, reflète une vérité plus profonde, qui a complètement échappé à notre auteur. On est tenté de croire d'autant plus à cette hypothèse qu'Athénagore lui-même nous enseigne qu'il a emprunté le mythe aux écrits orphiques [2], qui montrent comme dans un miroir, parfois un peu embué peut-être, une couche très ancienne de la religiosité grecque [3]. A cette époque l'imagination humaine n'avait pas encore moulé

---

1) Athénagore, La supplique au sujet des chrétiens XX 20-26.

.... ὅτι Ζεὺς τὴν μητέρα 'Ρέαν ἀπαγορεύουσαν αὐτοῦ τόν γάμον ἐδίωκε, δρακαίνης δ'αὐτῆς γενομένης καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς δράκοντα μεταβαλὼν συνδήσας αὐτὴν τῷ καλουμένῳ 'Ηρακλειωτικῷ ἄμματι ἐμίγη (τοῦ σχήματος τῆς μίξεως σύμβολον ἡ τοῦ 'Ερμοῦ ῥάβδος), εἶθ'ὅτι Φερσεφόνη τῇ θυγατρὶ ἐμίγη βιασάμενος καὶ ταύτην ἐν δράκοντος σχήματι ἐξ ἧς παῖς Διόνυσος αὐτῷ. τί τὸ σεμνὸν ἢ χρηστὸν τῆς τοιαύτης ἱστορίας, ἵνα πιστευσώμεν θεοὺς εἶναι τὸν Κρόνον, τὸν Δία, τὴν Κόρην, τοὺς λοιπούς;

2) Par exemple Supplique XVIII, 3 et XX, 3.

3) W. K. C. Guthrie, Orpheus and Greek Religion[3] (New York 1966) 55 et

les formules abstraites, mais elle se servait d'expressions mythiques pour déceler les "essentialia" de l'existence tant des dieux que des hommes.

C'est pourquoi dans cet article je veux essayer de dégager de ce langage mythique la vérité abstraite, le contenu essentiel, qu'Athénagore semble avoir passé sous silence ou qu'il n'a même pas remarqué. En m'engageant dans cette étude, je me vois obligé de discuter le mythe dans la forme sous laquelle Athénagore nous l'a transmis puisqu'aucun autre auteur classique ne semble le connaître. Je ne pourrai donc pas en comparer les détails qui me fourniront le matériel pour aboutir à une conclusion générale sur le mythe.

Le plan de l'article est comme suit. J'examinerai d'abord quelques fonctions du serpent dans le langage mythique en général, ensuite le sens du nœud d'Hercule dans la littérature grecque et romaine et, en dernier lieu, la signification du caducée d'Hermès.

Le matériel rassemblé dans ces trois chapitres nous donnera très probablement une bonne base pour établir le sens véritable de ce récit étrange, mais fascinant.

A. Le serpent.

Le serpent a joué un rôle très important dans le langage mythique de tous les peuples. On le rencontre chez les Indiens, chez les Hébreux (le serpent du paradis), chez les Egyptiens, mais aussi chez les Grecs[4]). La première tâche d'Hercule per exemple fut d'étrangler les serpents que Héra, jalouse, avait envoyés pour l'étouffer au berceau. Plus tard il tua l'hydre de Lerne[5]), tout comme Apollon avait tué le Python

---

85ss. E. Rohde, Psyche, Engl. ed. (London 1950) Appendix IX. P. Ubaldi, Atenagora, La supplica per i cristiani (Torino s.a.) XXV.

4) Quelques livres sur ce sujet: C. F. Oldham, The Sun and the Serpent (London 1905); M. Oldfield Howey, The Encircled Serpent (New York 1955); E. Küster, Die Schlange in der griechischen Kunst und Religion (Giessen 1913) (Rel. gesch. Vers. u. Vorarb. XIII, 2); J. Maehly, Die Schlange in Mythus und Cultus der classischen Völker, (Basel 1867). Voir aussi C. G. Jung, De mens en zijn symbolen (Rotterdam 1968) 165; J. Fontenrose, Python (Berkeley and Los Angelos 1959); W. Brede Kristensen, Symbool en werkelijkheid (Zeist 1962) 263 ss.; R. et D. Morris, Men and Snakes (London 1965), surtout p. 20-38. Sur le serpent dans le gnosticisme H. Jonas, Het Gnosticisme (Utrecht 1969) 111 et 133. A. Dieterich, Abraxas (Leipzig 1891) 111 ss.

5) Mais il s'unit à un serpent à son tour, Hérod. IV, 9 et parfois il est un serpent (Athénagore, Suppl. XVIII). Cf. J. Rudhardt, Le thème de l'eau primordiale dans la mythologie grecque (Berne 1971) 12 ss.

à Delphes. Le serpent symbolise ici les puissances obscures qui mena-
cent l'existence d'un homme ou même d'un héros. Dans le culte
d'Asclépios le serpent devient le symbole de la puissance qu'Asclépios
possède pour guérir les malades qui viennent le voir. [6]) Et quand
au moment de la mort d'un homme un serpent se glissait dans un
trou du mur, les anciens savaient que alors définitivement l'âme
s'était séparée de son corps et avait commencé son voyage sou-
terrain. [7])D'autres aspects du serpent se révèlent dans notre récit
où deux divinités se transforment en serpents, l'une pour échapper à
l'autre, l'autre pour lui faire l'amour [8]). Ce mythe n'est pas isolé
d'ailleurs. Car en parcourant les histoires des dieux et des héros grecs
on ne tarde pas à découvrir que le même thème se rencontre dans le
mythe d'Apollon et de Dryope où Apollon se change d'abord en une
tortue avec qui Dryope joue et qu'elle met dans son sein. A ce moment
Apollon se transforme en un serpent qui chasse ses amies et qui,
ensuite, s'unit à elle [9]). Pélée noue avec un lien très fort [10]) son
épouse Thétis qui prend beaucoup de formes entre autres celle du
serpent pour échapper au mariage avec Pélée [11]). A Rome on raconte
l'histoire de Faunus ayant commerce avec Bona Dea (qui est appelée
aussi Fauna), sous la forme d'un serpent [12]). Dans ce contexte il ne

---

6) Cf. le serpent d'airain qui figure Nombres 21:9. Sur les relations entre
Hermès et Asklépios cf. J. Schouten, De Slangestaf van Asklepios als symbool
v. d. Geneeskunde (Utrecht 1963) 113 et M. Oldfield Howey o.c. p. 94.

7) Cf. p.e. Porphyre, Vie de Plotin 2, 27.

8) Zeus lui-même a été vénéré sous la forme d'un serpent: Zeus Sabazios
ou Zeus Ktesios. Cf. Küsters o.c. 145 et M. P. Nilsson, Geschichte der grie-
chischen Religion (München 1951) II, 217, 621 et 660ss. Le „Zeus des Haus-
kultes" est identique au serpent et à l'Agathos Daimon. Sabazios est identifié
aussi à Dionysos, le fils de Zeus que Proserpine lui a enfanté! Aussi A. Dieterich,
Eine Mithrasliturgie (Darmstadt 1966) 123 ss.; U. von Wilamowitz Moellen-
dorff, Der Glaube der Hellenen I (Darmstadt 1959) 341. Sur l'union de Zeus
avec Proserpine cf. Tatien, Adv. Graecos X et Clément d'Alexandrie, Protr.
II, 16, 1.

9) Antoninus Liberalis XXXII.

10) Ovide, Métam. XI, 252: vincloque innecte tenaci.

11) Cf. J. G. Frazer, Apollodorus, the Library, (Loeb 1956 [3]) II, 68: all these
stories of changes were appropriately told of water spirits (Thetis, Achelous
and Nereus); their mutability reflects the instability of the fickle element of which
they were born. Cf. aussi Hom. Od. IV, 354 et Apollodore Bibl. II, 5, 11 et II,
7, 5. Aussi M. Ninck, Die Bedeutung des Wassers im Kult und Leben der Alten
(Darmstadt 1960) 164ss.

12) Macr. I, 12, 23 et 25. Cf. Maehly o.c. 13: Fauna hat in ihren Eigenschaften
(Segen, Weissagung, Heilung und Wissenschaft) viel Ähnlichkeit mit der

faudra pas non plus oublier les récits des naissances miraculeuses des grands héros de l'antiquité: Scipion, Alexandre le Grand, Auguste et même Galère. On raconte que, avant leurs conceptions, leurs mères avaient vu un serpent dans leurs rêves [13]). Et on raconte aussi, que pas mal de femmes se sont rendues au sanctuaire d'Asclépios περὶ παιδῶν [14]). Arrivées là, elles voyaient un serpent dans leurs rêves et après, elles se trouvaient être enceintes.

Le serpent peut avoir aussi la fonction d'un gardien de sanctuaire comme à l'Acropole, et beaucoup de femmes portent autour de leur cou des colliers sous forme de serpents pour se protéger contre toutes sortes de maux [15]).

Il n'est guère surprenant maintenant que de l'avis des anciens le serpent aussi peut prédire et prévoir le futur [16]). Le mot grec δράκων est dérivé de δέρκομαι (voir) et souvent l'histoire d'un devin est étroitement liée à celle d'un serpent (p.e. Calchas, Cassandre, Mélampous et la Pythie).

En résumé on peut dire que le serpent a entre autres les fonctions suivantes:

Schlange. Dans l'antiquité on a construit des relations intéressantes entre quelques divinités nommées ici: Macrobe (I, 12, 21 et 24; cf. aussi Wilamowitz Glaube I, 200 et 202) nous raconte que Cornelius Labeo a dit que Maia (la mère d'Hermès) s'est vu dédier un temple sous le nom de Bonne Déesse (= Rhéa) qui n'est autre que la Terre. Cette déesse est désignée aussi sous le nom de Fauna, d'Ops et de Fatua. Quelques auteurs la confondent avec Juno ou Proserpina. Maia était selon ces auteurs la fille de Faunus, qui, étant devenu amoureux d'elle, se transforma en un serpent et ainsi s'unit à elle. Bien que l'identification de la mère d'Hermès avec la nymphe romaine de la fertilité ne soit pas correcte, on trouve d'autres histoires où Hermès est mis en contact avec ce groupe de dieux. Hermès et Faunus sont cités comme fils de Zeus Picus, mais Faunus est parfois aussi le fils d'Hermès et de la nymphe Dryope que nous avons rencontrée dans le mythe d'Apollon (cf. R. Graves, The Greek Myths (Pelican Books) I, 193 et M. Kerenyi, Die Mythologie der Griechen (Zürich 1951) 139 et 171.

13) Cf. F. Taeger, Charisma (Stuttgart 1960) II, 27 et 470. Maehly o.c. 12.

14) Cf. Küsters o.c. 158. Aussi C. G. Jung, Symbole der Wandlung (Freiburg im Br. 1971) 12 ss. J. Bayet, Croyances et rites dans la Rome antique (Paris 1971) 375.

15) Cf. Hérodote, Hist. VIII, 41; Macrobe I, 12, 24; Maehly o.c. 13 et L. Stephani, Erklärungen einiger 1878/79 im südlichen Russland gefundenen Kunstwerke, in Supp. du compte rendu de la commission impériale archéologique (Petersbourg 1882) 68.

16) Élien, De nat. anim. XI, 16: A Lanuvium les serpents peuvent dire si la prêtresse est une vierge ou non. Aussi Macr. I, 19, 20 et Eschyle, Eum 2 où Gaia est appelée πρωτόμαντις. Brede Kristensen o.c. 265 et Maehly o.c. 7.

1. Il est le symbole de la terre, des puissances obscures et mena-
   çantes qu'un dieu sauveur assujettit pour garantir la paix aux
   hommes [17]).
2. Il symbolise l'âme quand elle quitte le corps et voyage dans le
   souterrain.
3. A cause de son agilité il est le symbole d'un être qu'il est difficile
   d'attraper.
4. Il est le symbole de la fertilité.
5. Il est le symbole de la guérison et de la protection contre les maux.
6. Il est le symbole du „schaffenden Genius und der ewigen Ver-
   jüngung und Erneuerung des Jahres" [18]).

B. Le nœud d'Hercule.

Le thème du nouement pour des fins différentes est assez connu
dans l'histoire des religions [19]). Dans l'Inde Vishnu lie ses adversaires
tout comme Ouranos, Kronos, Zeus et le sommeil se servent de liens
pour assujettir les dieux et les hommes qui les menacent [20]). Sur un
tout autre plan, celui des pratiques des magiciens, l'emploi des "defix-
iones" ou κατάδεσμοι est bien répandu pour tuer les adversaires, mais
aussi pour bloquer la naissance d'enfants [21]). C'est chez les grecs
surtout Héphaistos le forgeron, qui est le maître des liens et qui à
l'aide de ces pratiques peut réussir dans les cas où la force ou le génie
lui font défaut. Les liens héphaistiens sont indissolubles et ils sont
employés même au sens figuré: un homme est ligoté par ses passions
comme par des liens héphaistiens [22]).

---

17) Il est intéressant de voir que dans le gnoticisme le serpent symbolise
l'illumination plutôt que la perdition. Cf. H. Jonas in Le Origini dello Gnosti-
cismo. Numen Suppl. XII (Leiden 1967) 106. A Dieterich, Abraxas, (Leipzig
1891) 126.

18) Maehly o.c. 7; le serpent perd sa peau chaque année et ainsi il se rajeunit.

19) Is. Scheftelowitz, Das Schlingen- und Netzmotiv im Glauben und Brauch
der Völker (Rel. gesch. Vers. u. Vorarb. XII, 2 Giessen 1912). J. Heckenbach,
De nudiate sacra sacrisque vinculis (Rel. gesch. Vers. u. Vorarb. IX, 3 Giessen
1911).

20) M. Eliade, Images et symboles (Paris 1952) 120 ss. et surtout 145 s.

21) M. Delcourt, Héphaistos ou la légende du magicien (Paris 1957) 22 ss. On
se souvient que Héra elle-même est descendue du ciel pour ralentir la naissance
d'Hercule en faisant un nœud avec ses mains autour de ses genoux. D'autres
auteurs nous racontent que ce n'est pas Héra mais Eileithyia ou une autre déesse
qui fait le noeud. Cf. Ov. Mét. IX, 298 et R. Graves, The Greek Myths II, 86
et 87.

22) Stobaeus s.v. Ἡφαίστειος δεσμός et Delcourt o.c. 63. Il est intéressant de

Mais ce n'est pas du lien d'Héphaistos qu'il s'agit ici. En général on traduit les mots grecs Ἡρακλειωτικὸν ἄμμα comme nœud d'Hercule (et non pas comme noeud d'Héraclée, une ville en Asie Mineure qui a prêté son nom à la pierre d'Héraclée, l'aimant [23])). Tandisqu'il n'y a aucun lien connu entre la ville et ce noeud, on trouve des in-n'y a aucun lien connu entre la ville et ce nœud, on trouve des indications qu'Héraclès a fait ou défait un nœud pour accomplir des le nœud de Juno et que, ainsi, il la priva de sa virginité [24]).

Paulus [25]) explique que ce nœud qui augmente la fertilité est appelé herculéen parce que Héraclès lui-même avait 70 enfants. Cependant, ces indications ne sont pas encore des preuves et c'est pour cela que je partage l'opinion d'Heckenbach qu'il n'est pas du tout certain pourquoi ce nœud est appelé herculéen [26]).

Il est temps d'essayer d'établir la forme et la signification de ce nœud.

La description la plus technique se trouve dans Oribase: [27]) Pour

---

noter ici que Héphaistos a lié sa mère (Platon Rép. II, 387a) et qu'il n'a voulu la délivrer qu'après que Zeus lui avait promis Athéna. Quand il voulut la prendre, Athéna défendit sa virginité et le sperme d'Héphaistos fut gaspillé sur le sol. De ce sperme naquit Erichthonios, le dieu des serpents (Hyg. Fab. 166). Cf. Delcourt o.c. 86-88 et Oldham o.c. 195).

23) Sur la pierre cf. la discussion de H. Flashar, Der Dialog Ion als Zeugnis platonischer Philosophie (Berlin 1958) 55. Sur le nœud: L. Stephani o.c. 46, et C. A. Böttiger, Über die vorgeblichen Schlangen am Merkuriusstabe (Amalthea I, Leipzig 1820) 111-113. M. Bussemaker traduit encore "noeud d'Héraclée" (son édition d'Oribase, Paris 1862, p. 261).

24) Roscher's Lexikon der gr. Mythol. I, 2260.

25) Voir ci-dessous (note 32).

26) Heckenbach o.c. 104 n. 2.

27) Oribase, De Laqueis, coll. med. XLVIII, 8 Bussemaker:

ἕνεκα τοῦ Ἡρακλεωτικοῦ ἄμματος καιρία προσλαμβάνεται, καὶ γίνεται ἐκ τῆς καιρίας δύο ἄμματα ἀπὸ ἀλλήλων διεστῶτα· ἐντεῦθεν παρανακύπτει τὸ Ἡρακλεωτικὸν ἄμμα παρ' ἑκάτερα ὅπου μὲν ἀγκύλα μία, ὅπου δ'ἀρχαὶ δύο. ἔστι δ'ἰσότονος ὁ βρόχος οὗτος· εἴ τις δὲ τὴν ἀντικειμένην ταῖς ἀρχαῖς ἀγκύλην μέσην διακόψειεν, εὑρήσει γεγονότα τὸν λύκον.

Sur les deux manières de faire ce nœud cf. Stephani o.c. 33 et 34. Le mot συνδήσας dans le texte d'Athénagore indique qu'il s'agit ici du premier noeud. Les auteurs classiques emploient le verbe pour désigner entre autres l'enchaînement de deux pieds (Od. X, 168). Zeus a pris la tête et la queue du serpent et il les a nouées avec deux nœuds étoignés l'un de l'autre, ce qui fait le nœud d'Hercule. Ensuite Zeus s'est uni à elle, c'est à dire qu'il s'est allongé sur elle comme la baguette du caducée sur sa couronne. On sait que l'accouplement de deux serpents a lieu dans une forme qui ressemble beaucoup à celle du caducée: cf. C. Naaktgeboren, Voortplanting bij het dier (Deventer 1967) 21 et 23, et A. Carr, De reptielen (Amsterdam 1965) 129 ss. Pour une autre opinion cf.

faire le nœud d'Hercule, on prend un cordon, et on fait avec ce cordon deux nœuds éloignés l'un de l'autre. C'est ainsi que se produit le nœud d'Hercule: à savoir, des deux côtés, d'une part une anse, et de l'autre deux chefs. Ce lacs est un lacs à tension égale; si on veut couper par le milieu l'anse opposée aux chefs, on verra qu'il résulte un loup.

Suivant cette description on peut faire les figures suivantes:
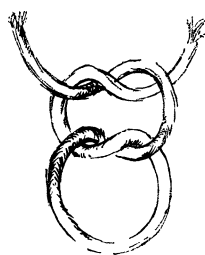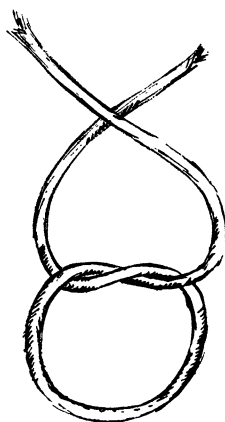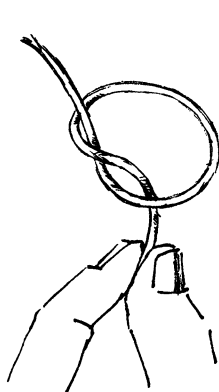
Le nœud d'Hercule
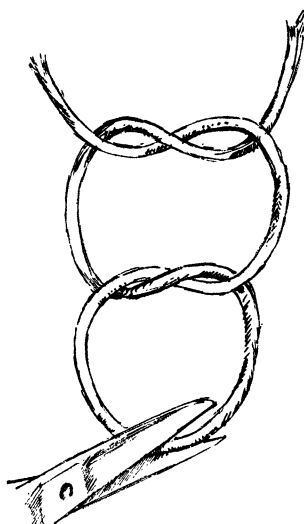
Le loup

Dans ses Histoires Naturelles Pline nous raconte que les blessures guérissent beaucoup plus vite si on fixe le pansement avec le nœud d'Hercule et l'on dit aussi qu'attacher chaque jour sa ceinture en la nouant de cette manière comporte une certaine utilité, puisque dans le livre qu'il a écrit Démétrius nous enseigne que le nombre quatre est consacré à Héraclès [28]).

Sénèque l'emploie dans un sens figuré: il ne te demeure qu'un seul nœud, mais c'est celui d'Hercule [29]).

Macrobe nous transmet la légende de deux serpents qui se sont entrelacés avec le nœud d'Hercule. Il nous explique que ce nœud exprime la nécessité, tandis que le baiser signifie le lien d'amour [30]).

Selon Apostolios l'expression "le nœud d'Hercule" se dit d'un lien fort et solide [31]).

La dernière référence se trouve chez Paulus. Il nous raconte que les hommes de l'antiquité avaient l'habitude de dénouer la ceinture des jeunes mariées le jour du mariage. Cette ceinture était fixée avec le nœud d'Hercule, afin d'assurer un mariage des plus fertiles, parce que Hercule lui-même avait 70 enfants [32]).

Morris o.c. 139. On peut comparer aussi le récit de Macrobe (XIX) sur l'origine du caducée et la légende de Teirésias chez Ovide (Mét. III, 324 ss.). Macrobe nous enseigne cependant que le nœud lie *deux* serpents, tandis qu'Ovide aussi parle de *deux* serpents séparés par le bâton de Teirésias.

28) Plin. Nat. Hist. 28, 17, 63 volnera nodo Herculis praeligare mirum quantum ocior medicina est, atque etiam cottidiani cinctus tali nodo vim quandam habere utilem dicuntur quippe, cum Herculaneum prodiderit numerum quoque quaternarium Demetrius condito volumine, (et quare quaterni cyathi sextariive non essent potandi).

29) Ep. 87, 38: Unus tibi nodus, sed Herculaneus, restat.

30) I, 19, 16: In Mercurio solem coli etiam ex caduceo claret, quod Aegyptii in specie draconum maris et feminae conjunctorum figuraverunt Mercurio consecrandum. Hi dracones parte media voluminis sui invicem nodo, quem vocant Herculis obligantur, primaeque partes eorum reflexae in circulum pressis osculis ambitum circuli iungunt, et post nodum caudae revocantur ad capulum caducei ornanturque alis ex eadem capuli parte nascentibus. Cf. 17 fin. amor osculo significatur, necessitas nodo.

31) Apostolios Proverbia VIII, 64a: Ἡράκλειον ἄμμα· ἐπὶ τοῦ δυνατοῦ καὶ ἰσχυροῦ δεσμοῦ λέγεται.

32) Paulus ap. Fest. 63,18 M. s.v. cingillo: Hunc Herculaneo nodo vinctum vir solvit ominis boni gratia, ut sic ipse felix sit in suscipiendis liberis, ut fuit Hercules, qui septuaginta liberos reliquit. Sur l'aspect de la fertilité du noeud cf. aussi Plin. Nat. Hist. XXVIII, 9, 42; Heckenbach o.c. 79 et 104 et Stephani o.c. 30. Les vierges vestaliennes portent aussi le nœud d'Hercule. Scheftelowitz o.c. 38, 53 et 55 ss et F. J. M. de Waele, The Magic Staff or Rod in Graeco-Italian Antiquity (Gent 1927) 52. On parle en français aussi d'un lacs d'amour! En

A côté de la tradition littéraire on rencontre le nœud aussi sur infiniment de vases, de chaînes, de lampes, etc. [33]) Il ne fait aucun doute que ce motif ait été appliqué non seulement à cause de sa beauté ou de sa force. A l'en croire Stephani c'est surtout une puissance prophylactique que les artisans et ceux qui achetaient leurs produits ont discerné dans l'emblème, en particular quand il était en combinaison avec la tête de Gorgon.

En conclusion on peut donc dire que le nœud d'Hercule est employé parce qu'il

1. est fort,
2. exprime une puissance apotropaïque ou prophylactique,
3. contribue à la fertilité,
4. contribue à la guérison.

C. Le caducée ou la baguette d'Hermès.

La forme originale du caducée a été beaucoup discutée. Certains auteurs antiques maintiennent la théorie selon laquelle l'extrémité de la baguette est dès l'abord formée par deux serpents dessinant un huit [34]). Des fouilles plus récentes cependant ont mis au jour que les premières représentations du caducée ne montrent pas de serpents entrelacés, mais plutôt des branches pliées. Mieux vaut accepter pour cette raison une origine végétative du caducée [35]). Les rameaux flexibles originels ont pris plus tard la forme de deux serpents, certainement sous l'influence du fait qu'Hermès était aussi un dieu chthonien, qui avait des relations intimes avec les dieux du monde souterrain. L'animal qui symbolise le mieux les puissances du souterrain est sans aucun doute le serpent. La relation entre Hermès et le serpent se

---

général c'est le dénouement du nœud qui garantit la fertilité. Mais sur le double sens du nœud dans les mythes cf. M. Eliade o.c. 147 s.

33) Cf. surtout le livre cité de Stéphani. Il est certain que C. B. Gulick ne traduit pas correctement l'expression σκύφος Ἡρακλειωτικός (Athénée, Deipnos. XI, 500a: very large vessel). C'est plutôt un vase avec le motif du nœud d'Hercule. Cf. aussi son édition d'Athénée II, 197.

34) Hyg. Astr. II, 7, 22. Macr. I, 19, 16. Cf. aussi le récit de Teirésias (Ov. Mét. III, 324 ss.) et le commentaire de De Waele o.c. 40.

35) Cf. L. Preller, Theogonie und Götter (Berl.-Zürich 1960) 413. O. A. Hoffmann, Hermes und Kerukeion (Marburg 1890) et De Waele o.c. 43 et 77. Aussi L. Preller, Der Hermesstab, Philologus I (1846) 512 ss. et Brede Kristensen, o.c. 226 ss.

montre plus tard aussi dans l'alchimie: le *serpens mercurialis* devient le symbole de la *prima materies* [36]).

Le caractère chthonien du dieu se manifeste aussi dans son attribut qu'on rencontre aux carrefours: l' ἕρμαξ ou ἕρμαιον un simple pilier avec l'indication d'un φαλλός [37]), car il était aussi le dieu de la fertilité qui faisait croître les plantes et augmenter les troupeaux. Dans l'Hadès Hermès psychopompe guidait les âmes portant sa baguette magique avec laquelle il pouvait endormir et ressusciter les hommes, mais aussi protéger leurs mariages [38]). Outre ses voyages au souterrain il entretenait les relations entre le Ciel et la Terre en sa qualité de pacificateur qui met fin au chaos et fait la paix où la guerre sévit [39]).

La forme du caducée est très variée. On trouve une baguette avec deux petites cornes, une baguette avec un cercle, couronné par deux cornes serpents, ou même avec deux ou trois cercles couronnés par deux serpents [40]):

---
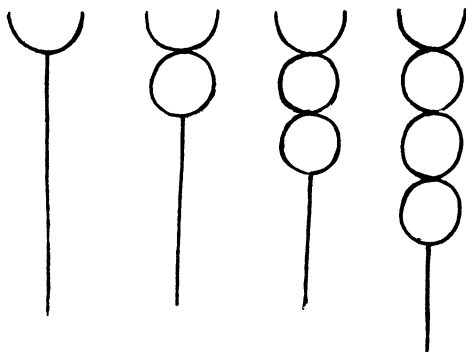
36) C. G. Jung, Zur Psychologie westlicher und östlicher Religion (Stuttgart 1963) 108: Dans des livres alchimiques on trouve le texte suivant: L'esprit de dieu a produit une force qui pénétrait tout et qui se mélangeait avec la lumière pour produire dans le royaume inférieur le serpent de Mercure. Aussi p. 256 ss. Cf. aussi H. Silberer, Probleme der Mystik und ihrer Symbolik (Darmstadt 1961) 94 et 99. J. Schouten, o.c., 115 ss.

37) Cf. De Waele o.c. 30 et N. O. Brown, Hermes the Thief (Univ. of Wisconsin 1947) 32 ss. Hoffmann o.c. 5-8.

38) Cf. Brown o.c. 42 et De Waele o.c. 56 s. On trouve la baguette magique aussi entre les mains de Rhéa (De Waele o.c. 100).

39) Plin. Nat. Hist. XXIX, 12, 54, Cornutus, Theol. gr. comp. 23, 2 (Lang) et Hérod. IX, 100. Cf. aussi Brede Kristensen o.c. 268 ss.

40) Quelques images dans De Waele o.c. 212, Hoffmann o.c. 52 et Preller (Philologus I) 519.

Quelques auteurs le décrivent comme une baguette couronnée par un seul serpent [41]).

Puisqu'il n'est pas intéressant de se demander ici si le caducée est d'origine grecque ou importé d'ailleurs [42]), je vais résumer les significations différentes qu'on lui a accordées. On a pensé à une puissance purement fertilizante [43]) (le symbole du dieu protecteur des troupeaux), mais aussi au fait qu'Hermès était le roi des trois empires et que son rôle etait pacifique. D'autres auteurs ont indiqué la relation entre le soleil et la lune et la forme du caducée [44]). D'autre part M. de Waele [45]) a proposé qu'il exprime l'idée du pouvoir en général, mais surtout celui du magicien qui protège celui qui le porte et qui guérit celui qui s'en remet [46]).

Conclusion.

Dressons maintenant le bilan. Nous avons vu que la fertilité est symbolisée par tous les aspects du mythe en question. Cela implique que les conséquences, les résultats de ce qui se passe seront énormes. Mais d'autres thèmes aussi reviennent toujours et s'entrelacent avec celui de la fertilité. L'être chthonien (Rhéa), la force obscure, malgré ses efforts de s'échapper a été assujettie, et définitivement, par le dieu de la lumière. Le chaos est transformé en ordre, la paix vient au lieu

---

41) Par exemple Martialis 7, 74, 1 : aurea cui torto virga dracone viret. Cf. R. Boetzkes, Das Kerukeion (Giessen 1913) 26.

42) Sur les théories là-dessus cf. De Waele o.c. 30 et 40 ss.

43) Hoffmann o.c. 30 fait remarquer qu'Hermès est accompagné d'un bélier. Cf. aussi Oldfield Howey o.c. 75 : the male and the female serpents (sun and moon) are symbols of generation, whilst the rod represents the phallus.

44) C'est surtout Hoffmann qui a prôné cette théorie.

45) O.c. p. 77 ss.

46) J. Schouten o.c. 114. Hermès et Héraclès ont des relations étroites. On trouve un culte commun des deux dieux à côté de sources chaudes par exemple à Méthana (J. H. Croon, The Herdsman of the Dead (Utrecht 1952) 7 et Hoffmann o.c. 29 : auf Sicilien wurden Hermes und Herakles zusammen verehrt und bildlich in einer Figur dargestellt, die man Hermerakles nannte (Cicéron ad Att. I, 10, 3. Cf. aussi Hoffmann o.c. 33). Dans les palestres tous les deux peuvent dominer (Gruppe in R. E. Suppl. III, 1100 et De Waele o.c. 55. Aussi Cornutus 25, 22-26, 2 (Lang)). Ils ont aussi la fonction de gardiens des frontières et on trouve même le caducée entre les mains d'Hercules Ogmius (Oldfield Howey o.c. 71). Hermès a aussi joué un rôle dans la décapitation de la Méduse par Perseus et on a découvert des représentations de la tête de Méduse entourée de serpents, qui étaient noués sous son menton avec un nœud d'Hercule (Apollodore II, 4, 2 et Oldfield Howey o.c. 77). C. G. Jung, Symbole der Wandlung 208 ss. montre aussi les relations entre Hermès, (Dionysos), et Héphaistos.

de la guerre, les maux du monde sont guéris et la mort est, pour ainsi dire, vaincue. Et ce n'est pas seulement sur le plan cosmique que cette expression primitive de la conscience humaine nous révèle un événement de premier ordre. A l'en croire M. Diel [47]) le serpent de Déméter (Rhéa) — le Python — est le symbole non plus de la coulpe morale et individuelle, mais de la coulpe métaphysique et générale, le symbole du principe du mal inhérent à tout ce qui est terrestre. Zeus en soumettant Rhéa symbolise la victoire du ciel sur la terre, mais aussi de l'esprit sur la vanité du corps. Le mythe contient une double synthèse, la synthèse cosmogonique Ciel-Terre, et la synthèse psychologique Esprit-Corps qui toutes les deux signifient un progrès décisif dans l'histoire du genre humain. L'accouplement des serpents symbolise l'unification de tout ce qui existe, dans un centre mystique, la *prima materies,* désignée dans l'alchimie sous le nom de *"serpens mercurialis"* [48]).

Le cercle est bouclé. Athénagore de son point de vue a eu raison de dénoncer l'extérieur choquant d'une histoire primitive dont il n'avait pas compris la signification révélatrice. Malgré ce défaut nous pouvons être contents qu'il nous ait transmis dans les vagues de son courroux cette épave précieuse qui nous évoque une étape extrêmement importante du réveil de l'imagination humaine.

---

47) P. Diel, Le symbolisme dans la mythologie grecque (Paris 1952) 250.
48) Cf. ma note 33; aussi Schouten o.c. 117 et M. Delcourt, Hermaphrodite (Paris 1958) 124.

PATRONAGE FOR PUBLIC RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

BY

HENRY H. PRESLER
Jabalpur, M. P. India

The thesis of this paper is that *public religious institutions in India, which historically have enjoyed the patronage of India's aristocracy, are today resting upon the financial response of the masses,* who are unprepared culturally or economically to carry the burden. I shall maintain that the masses have rarely accepted the responsibility for building or maintaining public religious institutions in India, and have expected the elite to provide the sancturaries and the priests. The hypothesis is proposed that neither Hinduism, nor Buddhism, nor to a certain extent, Islam, expected the common people to provide a major share of self-support for temple, monastery, or mosque. Jainism and Sikhism, while expecting more from an economically advantaged laity, have also waited for the king, the noble, or the merchant to volunteer finance to construct a religious edifice and to support its functionaries thereafter. So pervading has been this expectation from the upper classes, this dependence upon the well-placed and the powerful, that it may be called a characteristic of Indian culture, not related to any particular religion, but shared by all Faiths. The Christian Mission in India did not inspire a new expectation, but rather harmonized with what already existed as custom, as folkway, as the standard order. Just as the rajas built temples for the use of the people, endowed his edifices with lands and villages, staffed them with gardeners, cooks, sweepers, and drawers of water, so the Christian Mission arrived in India with money, free religious functionaries (missionares), and salaries for every grade of staff.

Why?

Why the Indian masses have depended upon patronage to provide them with public institutions of religion, is a side issue in this paper.

It could be argued that feudalism elsewhere created a similar expectation and practice, or, that the low economic potential of India precluded mass responsibility for public institutions, or, that the privilege of bequeathing a magnificent temple satisfied the sincere desire of the aristocrats for religious merit, or, that the rich had no other repositories (such as banks, factories, or artefacts issuing from an industrial revolution) in which to place their surplus. Or, it could be urged that Hindu worship is preponderately individualistic rather than congregational. Religious assemblies do occur in normal Vaisnava cults and in some recent sects. On the whole, Hindu devotional exercises are private, not corporate, and the practice of group support for public temples does not occur. Hindu converts therefore have difficulty in grasping the idea of group support for a pastor. The question as to why it is so that public sanctuaries became the exclusive responsibility of the elite in India, is a problem for further study.

An Unprecedented Situation

The interest of this paper veers in another direction, namely, towards the unprecedented situation arising since Independence in 1947, in which, almost for the first time in the religious history of this country, the masses of men (in the absence of an aristocracy) are called upon to support public shrines. With the liquidation of the princely states, the creation of a secular state, the reduction of all classes towards a common denominator, the flooding of the market with machines, vehicles, and conveniences operating with gasoline or electrical power, and with the inauguration of modern methods of advertising aiming to plant hitherto unknown wants and "needs" in the hearts of the people of India, public religion has become bereft of a limited privileged class able and disposed to continue the age-old patronage. The public religious institutions of the Hindus, Moslems, and Christians — these three especially — are caught in a crisis for which there is no cultural preparation, no established procedures, no will, no adequate ability to support them. One can say positively that, in Mid-India, at least, the masses of India have not so much as thought of the possibility that henceforth the construction and maintenance of public religious institutions is theirs. Rather, they are engrossed in memories of the past when the "big people" did this for them.

The closest they come to present reality is to feel a deep resentment against a contemporary society failing to do the same.

Christianity's Innovation

This means that the announced decision of Christian benevolent sociaties in the West to reduce and ultimately to terminate subsidy for public religious institutions, repeats for Christianity what has already happened in the case of the major religions of India. The lethargy of the Christian masses in assuming a burden formerly provided by patronage may impress some; but to the writer, the early stirrings of responsibility in this community are in advance of anything noticed by him within the other religious communities. The achievement of self-support by some public institutions of the Christian religion in India run counter to the central stream of Indian cultural expectation because, almost for the first time, maintenance has been achieved by congregations of ordinary people, scattered over the surface of India. This success is one of the heroic tales in the modern religious history of India.

Notice the phrase, "almost for the first time." There are, in Mid-India among the Hindus, cases of sub-castes whose panchayats have instigated the construction of a temple and maintained it from their own resources, usually without a full-time functionary. But such are isolated and rare, confined to one locale, and not linked with other caste brotherhoods elsewhere. The distinctive achievement of the Christians in India, that which separates them in a meaningful way from other religious communities, is the chain of self-supporting central churches distributed from Cape Comorin to Nepal, and from the Bay of Bengal to the Indian Ocean. These independent congregations are situated at focal points in a network of related Christian groups. The amazing thing is that there are as many of them as there are today — amazing because they represent a cultural break in an age-old continuity of public patronage.

The foregoing will now be illustrated from the religious history of the Jabalpur valley.

Early Buddhism

The Emperor Asoka with his vast armies of soldiers, beaurocrats,

and Buddhist monks reached the Jabalpur valley about 250 B.C. His famous Rupnath Edict is inscribed on a pillar less than fifty miles away, and reads as follows:

> It is more than thirty-two years and a half that I became a bearer of the Law, and I did not exert myself strenuously; but it is a year and more that I entered the community of monks. Those gods who until this time had been considered true gods, have been abjured. etc. etc.

In a local stone quarry are sandstone pedestals engraved with what appear to be figurines of Buddhist monks. Four stone images of Bodhisatva Awalokiteshwar have been found in village Gopalpur near Bheraghat, and one image of Vajrasansth Bodhisth at village Tewar. These stone remains provide reasonably certain historical evidence of the presence in the Jabalpur valley of royal patronage for public Buddhist institutions and monasteries. The collapse of the Mauryan dynasty shifted the responsibility for such institutions to the masses, who dropped it unreservedly and unceremoniously. However thoroughly converted to the Buddhist Law the common people may have been, it was too divergent for them to continue to maintain what the emperor had established for them. Jabalpur was not an isolated case; Buddhism disappeared from India for a constellation of reasons, one of which was its basis in patronage.

The Guptas 320-550 A.D.

Samudra Gupta came to the throne about 328 A.D. and his victory over the Dabhala kingdom (Jabalpur) was inevitable. The outstanding innovation of the Guptas from the point of view of this paper, was the construction of public temples with dressed stone masonry. The type of stone chosen had every quality of permanence. Moreover, the Guptas endowed such public edifices with benefactions in the form of land grants and villages containing laborers restricted to the gathering of agricultural surpluses with which to maintain the temples. The Tigawa temple in Jabalpur District is a typical Gupta example, dedicated to Vishnu. There are evidences, also, of Gupta monasteries for priests and scholars. Here, then, were the requirements for enduring institutions: granite and even marble sanctuaries, resources in landed property, organizations of priests and scribes. The Gupta empire endured for some 230 years and patronage was large and generous. The break-up of that empire again shifted the responsibility to the masses. There is no evidence whatever that they arose to the challenge. It is

difficult to identify and to estimate the various causes contributing
to the collapse of the Gupta religious system. After 230 years might
it not be surmised that something in the way of democratic responsibility
could have been assumed by the generations of believers fostered within
that patronage? Even within the range of a century nothing in the way
of mass support for the public religious institutions of the Guptas
is traceable.

The Kalchuri Kingdom 875-1180 A.D.

A local dynasty with decisive influence on Jabalpur religion is
believed by us and some local scholars to have been founded by Telegu-
speaking people. Apparently the Kalchuris swept up from the Andhra
country and dominated the local *adhivasis*. The significant point for
this paper is that they were outsiders with great resources of political
power and the economic benefits accruing thereto. They took advantage
of the local outcroppings of marble and granite to chisel an enormous
quantity of excellent sculptures, resembling styles of the southland. Of
their many Shaivite and Vaishnavite temples and shrines, only one
illustration need be mentioned here, namely, Golki Math. This mon-
astery was in the shape of a perfect circle and hence its name. Nowa-
days people call it Chausath Yogini Mandir, based upon what the writer
would call a misunderstanding by the common people. It is located on
a hill above the famous Marble Rocks. Golki Math was the institution
of greatest religious creativity in this valley. Its branches were found
in South India at Tushpgiri, Triparantkam, Tiriparnakoram, and
Davikapuram, and as far west as the sea coast of the Maratta country.
Under royal patronage Golki Math had the historic temple, a school
with five professors of the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, logic, literature,
and the Shaivite Agamas. It had singers, priests, musicians, cooks,
servers, servants and accountants. Enthusiastic historians claim it was
endowed with one lakh of villages. The Kalchuri Empire was broken
by the Chandellas about 1210 A.D. Notice that it had endured for three
hundred and five years. So powerful a religious organization, attract-
ing pilgrims from distant regions, promoted by coteries of priests
and teachers, dedicated to the Pasupata System of Shaivism, had
penetrating local influence, illustrated by the sculptures frequently
ploughed up by farmers, and still proudly collected by pious Hindus.
The cessation of royal patronage, however, was disastrous. The leading

acharyas resident at Golki Math before the downfall of the Kalchuris, were not able to find maintenance among the masses. In their own lifetime, these same *acharyas* emigrated to the Tamil country and were able to obtain other noble patrons there. The Kalchuri public religious institutions were not maintained by the masses; they dropped them abruptly and let them die. Today the Golki Math is a museum specimen.

The Raj Gond Kingdom 1180-1857 A.D.

The longest period of political suzerainty enjoyed by any local kingdom of Jabalpur, was that of the outsiders who came to be known as Raj Gonds. Apparently the founders of the dynasty were kshatriyas who intermarried with aboriginees after establishing themselves by military means. There is a striking difference between Common Gond religion and Raj Gond religion. The former lacked public institutions with permanent buildings and a full-time paid priesthood. The latter imitated Hinduism by setting up a variety of public religious institutions with durable buildings and endowed priesthoods, located on fifty two lakelets, also constructed by the Raj Gonds for a variety of purposes, one of which was religious. Many illustrations for the thesis of this paper can be cited from the ruined remnants of an extensive array of stone and brick masonry, and the shattered banks of the lakelets. Only one will be named, namely, the Raj Gond patronage of the Gosains.

Gosain is the name for an order of religious mendicants of the Saivite sect, from which a caste has developed. The name means either *gaiswami,* master of cows, or *go-swami,* master of the senses. The aim of the Gosains in medieval India was to travel over the wildest tracts of country, proselytising the non-Aryan tribes. To these hazardous missionary tours the Gosains sometimes sacrificed their lives. The cultural island of Gondwana (in mid-India) was suited to their purpose and they infiltrated in considerable numbers.

The Gosain rules were more like the Gond or aboriginal procedures than the Brahmin rules. Most Gosain sects allowed marriage, permitted widow remarriage and divorce, ate the flesh of clean animals, and also of fowls, drank liquor, and usually did not rank high socially. Their success in the Jabalpur valley was striking, and the rajas patronized them by constructing monastic buildings, providing land gifts, and agricultural laborers to till the ground. The remnants of the

buildings, the temples, the tombs for the seated corpses, and even some
of the orchards providing fruit for the holy men, are to be seen today.
The doings of the Gosains, their families, their teachings still live
in the oral traditions of our people.

The last of the Raj Gond rulers was placed in the mouth of a British
cannon during the First War of Independence in 1857. The inquisitive
researcher may disturb the surface of the plateaus of Garha and find
the pottery fragments and the stone cannon ball of the British who
demolished the Raj Gond kingdom and disbursed its nobility and
inhabitants. What happened, for example, to the Gosain organization?
Did the masses assume their support? They emphatically did not
assume it; even after nearly 700 years they did not take over respon-
sibility for what royal patronage had provided for their religious
edification. Today a Gosain seen in Jabalpur is a pilgrim from else-
where. The extensive development of Gosain monasteries clustered
around the western end of the Jabalpur valley, once gave the locale
the name of "Little Benares." All of it is gone today: it was, in fact
no more in existence within a few years of the upheaval of 1857. The
common people did not shoulder the burden.

Temples of the Malguzars

The British not only hung the 1857 mutineers, they rewarded their
friends. Some of the leading families of the last century were estab-
lished on the perquisities given by the foreign rulers for loans of
money, animals, food, and shelter during the uproar. As in most
political conflicts there were at least two parties: "for and against."
Families who had been of advantage to the English were given land
and titles, appointments and favors. Not all of the *malguzars* (wealthy
land holders) had supported the foreigners during the so-called Mutiny;
but all *malguzars* had to come to terms with the victors.

These *malguzars* built up considerable surpluses, and began to
construct temples in the city and along the Nerbudda river, notably
at Lameta Ghat. Various native princes within a radius of four to
five hundred miles also constructed religious edifices along the sacred
stream. These sanctuaries set an example to the masses of generous
piety. They were not only furnished with exquisite statuary from
Jaipur, but were given full-time priests, subsidiary staffs, and
godowns for the storage of *ghi* and coconuts. The land owners deligthed

in providing *katha* (public exposition of scripture) and kirtan (song services), importing famous Hindu teachers and singers from centers of Hindu learning.

With the dawn of Independence, the temples built by the *malguzars* suffered drastic economic loss. Their income from rural land holdings was either reduced or eliminated. The policy of some state governments was to abolish absentee land-ownership altogether, and the endowed public institutions of religion were severed from patronage. Did the masses rise to the challenge? For answer one needs to visit the malguzar temples today. The roofs are caving in, rats and bats pollute the sanctuaries, enormous cracks split the walls, and some are quite fallen down. The melancholy decline and ruin of the patronized temples fills the hearts of informants with sadness. They will tell you of the past, when the sacred precincts thronged with worshippers, and temple bells rang out continuously from dawn to sunset. The old people will shake their heads wistfully. But when asked as to why they do not even bring a bucket of white-wash for one of the better preserved temples, they will tell you that it is the duty of the *malgusar's* grandson to provide the white-wash.

The Malwa Region

Other illustrations of patronage for public religious institutions in Mid-India are plentiful. Go to Ujjain and ask who built the two main temples at that Kumbh Mela site. Mahakaleshvar Mandir, one of the twelve most important Shaivite temples in India, was built and maintained for almost nine hundred years by the Scindia family. The leading Vaishnavite temple in Ujjain is also a Scindia bequest. Move south to Indore and ask who built the public temples there, who patronized Onkaleshwar Mandir to the south, and who built the Maheshwari temple complexes on the Nerbudda. The answer is that the Holkar family built and maintained them. Maheshwari is still maintained by the Holkars with a reduced staff of priests, musicians, pages, and gardeners. The *dwarpals* (doormen) dressed in medieval costume and bearing ancient maces and tridents, greet the casual visitor; forty Brahmins conduct the morning rituals; periodically a coterie of musicians beat the *dholak* and sound the *bina* (stringed instrument). At Maheshwari one still sees the "orthodox" patronage of public religious institutions by the raja's family. One can sense the splendor

of public religious institutions in India, operating from the largesse of the elite.

Conclusion

The reader should not suppose that there is any blame attached to the inability, or indisposition, or inactivity of the Indian masses. Our purpose is not to criticize, but to define a cultural trait. What we maintain is that for centuries and even millenia, the expectation of Indian culture has been that the elite would provide and support public institutions of religion, and that this expectation has penetrated nearly all Indian religions. The dawn of Indian democracy and the secular state illuminates a scene of unprecedented ineptitude. When were the Indian masses expected to shoulder this burden? Who built the mosques of Delhi, Agra, North India, the Deccan? Who built the cathedrals of Indian Christianity? Who built the modern and beautiful Birla temple on the road from Mathura to Brindaban? Who provided the wonderful public temples of Madurai and Tanjore? Any student of Indian history knows that the masses did not build, furnish, or maintain them.

Further, it is not my contention that what was the case, should continue to be the case. On the contrary, the streams of world religious influence today emenate from those lands in which the masses have been involved in the establishing and maintaining of public sanctuaries. In such lands the separation of Church and State has operated to remove the factor of patronage, and to draw the masses into the entire religious enterprise as participants and supporters. The separation of religion and political patronage has come to India. This is a new day.

Nevertheless, any program for the self-support of public religious institutions of any religion in India, must perforce reckon with the decisive break in an age-old tradition of patronage. The planning and timing must take account of the cultural factor. Rome was not built in a day.

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

The Culmination of the Thought of Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529)

BY

JULIA CHING
Canberra, Australia

As a philosopher and a wise man, the figure of Wang Shou-jen, more popularly known as Wang Yang-ming, towered above those of all others of the Ming (1368-1644) China [1]. He lived at a time when the glories of the early Ming empire had already faded into the past, as a succession of mediocre, pleasure-loving sovereigns increased the abuses of total power with the assistance of a 'secret police force' conducted by eunuchs, while also enforcing a strict official orthodoxy of thought through a rigid civil service examination regulating both the content of the syllabus as well as the form of expression of ideas [2]. He became himself a sign of contradiction, both during his own lifetime and after. His many achievements as a writer, statesman, soldier and thinker, could not conceal the underlying tensions he experienced in personal life, between the concern for inner freedom and self-transcendence, and the traditional Confucian teachings with its call for activity and service. A political misfortune occasioned by his courageous intervention in favour of certain officials unjustly imprisoned, led him into exile in remote Kweichow, and an experience of inner enlightenment which marked his whole later life and thought. He discovered in the midst of suffering and privations, that the secret of wisdom lay hidden in his own self-determining mind and heart (*hsin*). He grew continually in this discovery, throughout his later years of active military duties and the teaching of disciples. He went on from this to a further final discovery in the nature of wisdom, identified to *hsin*-in-itself and the method for acquiring it, which he

---

1) There is a good summary of Yang-ming's life, by Professor Wing-tsit Chan, "Wang Yang-ming: A Biography," *Philosophy East and West* XII (1972), 63-73.

2) For Ming history and thought, see *Chinese Government in Ming Times: Seven Studies,* ed. by Charles O. Hucker (New York, 1969) and *Self* and *Society in Ming Thought,* ed. by W. T. de Bary (N.Y., 1970).

described as *chih liang-chih,* extension of the knowledge of the good. This was his bequest to the world, which he left at the age of 57, when he died of illness after successfully completing a last military campaign in southern China.

Whereas Yang-ming's life and thought, for all their impact on the intellectual and political development of China, Japan and Korea, remain little known in the West except in a small circle of scholars, the *religious* dimension of his teachings has not been sufficiently discussed in the East itself. Yet Yang-ming's philosophy possesses clearly religious overtones, which are recognised by critics in present-day mainland China [3]). Certainly, the ambiguity of meaning attached to the religious dimensions of his thought can explain to an extent this reluctance on the part of Yang-ming scholars to probe more deeply into his legacy. One such difficult subject is Yang-ming's treatment of the problem of good and evil. True, it has given rise to a polemical literature for several centuries in Chinese history [4]). But a clear examination and analysis of Yang-ming's actual teaching is still lacking.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Yang-ming's treatment of the problem of evil is related to his discussions of *hsin*-in-itself. Here too, he is interested, not in ontological imperfections or physical evil, but in moral evil—that which proceeds from the evil intentions of the mind-and-heart. He said of flowers and weeds that the distinction made between them is purely arbitrary. After all, the same principle of life of Heaven-and-Earth flows through both [5]). In the human realm, when *hsin* is full of the pure "principle of Heaven" (*T'ien-li*), and therefore empty of all selfish desires, it may be said to be resting in the state of "highest good". This state, however, is beyond the distinctions of good and evil, should the word "good" be used merely in opposition to "evil". Thus the state of the

---

3) See Hou Wai-lu, *et. al., Chung-kuo ssu-hsiang t'ung-shih* (Peking, 1957) v. 4, pt. 2, 884-908.

4) See the writer's article, "Some Notes on the Wang Yang-ming Controversy," to be published in the *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia* (Sydney).

5) *Wang Wen-ch'eng kung ch'üan-shu,* [*WWKC*] SPTK 1st series, double-page lithograph ed., 1 : 79a; Wing-tsit Chan, tr. *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Non-Confucian Writings* (N.Y., 1963), 63.

"highest good" may also be described as being "neither good nor evil". This is true of *"hsin-*in-itself"—the mind-and-heart in a state of equilibrium, before the rise of emotions. This is also true of the mind-and-heart in a state of perfect harmony, after the rise of emotions. Evil only arises with the deviation from equilibrium or from harmony, that is, with undue attachment to the objects which attract our desires and provoke our emotions [6]).

> The highest good [refers to] *hsin-*in itself. When one deviates a little from this, there is evil. It is not as though there are two given opposites: good and evil. Good and evil are [two possible states] of one and the same thing [i.e. *hsin*] [7]).

This tendency to regard reality as a whole rather than in terms of its component parts, explains Yang-ming's understanding of evil. He recognized that human nature-in-itself (the *pen-t'i* of *hsing*) is neither good nor evil, while being capable of either good or evil. Both flow from the deepest recesses of man's *hsin,* being dependent on the activity of the intention. Neither can therefore be defined in terms of social conventions, exterior to the person and his convictions. He gave the example of the human eye, which takes on different expressions of joy or anger, which may glance fully and directly at its object or merely glimpse from its corners. He said that one should not identify the eye itself with any one of its expressions or postures, but should keep distinct its *t'i* (substance) and *yung* (activity). In describing human nature as good, Mencius was looking at it from its "substance" or source, as principle of its activity. In describing it as evil, Hsün-tzu was speaking mostly of abuses which arise in its activity. Mencius was anxious that people make efforts, to keep nature-in-itself clear and manifest. Hsün-tzu desired that measures be taken to correct the abuses of its activity, which however, made the task of self-cultivation more difficult [8]).

For Yang-ming, the question of good and evil lies simply in following the "principle of Heaven" or in deviating from it. When asked

---

6) *WWKC* 1 : 79b; Chan, *Instructions,* 63-64. See also Fung Yu-lan, *History of Chinese Philosophy,* tr. by Derk Bodde (Princeton, 1952-3), v. 2, 614-8.

7) *WWKC* 3 : 134b-135a; Chan, *Instructions,* 202.

8) *WWKC* 3 : 149-150; Chan, *Instructions,* 236-7.

whether the desire to remove weeds has at all a moral character, he refers the questioner back to his *hsin*-in-itself. All depends on the intentions, and that which moves the intentions. If *hsin* is moved inordinately by wrath or attachment, its desires are tainted by self-ishness. If *hsin* is correct, the desires and the acts which flow from them will also be correct [9]). Thus, the act of removing weeds is in itself indifferent. It only takes on a moral character when the mind-and-heart,with its intentions, intervenes.

As the British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, has asserted, mystical thought tends to regard a lower kind of good and evil as that which belongs only to the world of appearances, while the higher good is said to belong to Reality in its own nature, and is not opposed by any correlative kind of evil [10]). While Yang-ming holds that *hsin* in a state of equilibrium is in possession of the highest good which, in turn, is beyond conventional distinctions of good and evil, he does not require that a person make a special effort to "acquire" such a state. His disciple, Lu Ch'eng [11]) once questioned him on the Buddhist method of striving to "recognise one's original countenance (*pen-lai mien-mu*) at the time when one's mind-and-heart is clear of either good or evil thoughts" [12]). Lu knows it to be different from the Confucian way, recommended by Yang-ming, of "investigating things as they come", that is, of attending to affairs with a sincere heart. He said that the only time he knows of, when one's *hsin* is without good or evil thoughts, is when he is passing from sleep to waking. But this condition does not last long. In an instant, thought and deliberation will quickly arise. Lu himself had frequently sought to re-capture and maintain the disposition of equilibrium or tranquillity, when the mind-and-heart is without good or evil thoughts, but found it extremely difficult to do so.

---

9) *WWKC* 1 : 79b; Chan, *Instructions*, 65.

10) See his essay, "Mysticism and Logic", in *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays* (London, 1963) p. 26. Russell supports his assertion by references to Hegel and Spinoza. An even clearer exemplification would be the religious writer, Meister Eckhart, who declares that God, the absolute, is neither good nor evil because beyond such categories of human thought.

11) *WWKC* 2: 110a-b; Chan, *Instructions*, 140-3. The special effort would refer particularly to an arduous practice of sitting in meditation, for the sake of inducing a certain state of mind.

12) *Liu-tsu ta-shih fa-pao t'an-ching*, sec. 1, *Taishō Shinshu Daizōkyō* 48: 349. The word "thought" translates the word *nien*.

Yang-ming characterised the Buddhist method mentioned by Lu as an "expedient" technique which may be practised by those who do not yet understand or recognise their *hsin*-in-itself. For those, however, who already know what *hsin*-in-itself, or *liang-chih*-in-itself, is, there is no longer any need to make use of this technique. Besides, he explained that to *desire* to think of neither good nor evil involves already some selfishness, for it implies the wish to re-capture some past experience of [partial] enlightenment, which has served one well but is no longer necessary for self-cultivation. A person who seeks to "re-capture" a disposition known in the past resembles the man who constantly keeps vigil at the site of a tree where he once had captured a hare. He ought rather to look for hares elsewhere [13]).

The Four Maxims

In late 1527 Yang-ming was called back to active service from his life of retirement, and was given the task of suppressing rebellions in Kwangsi. As he was about to start, two of his disciples, Wang Chi and Ch'ien Te-hung, were discussing the Master's teachings. Wang Chi recalled four sentences which, according to him, Yang-ming was fond of repeating in his instructions on *liang-chih*. They were:

1. The absence of good and evil (*wu-shan wu-ô*) characterises *hsin*-in-itself.
2. The presence of good and evil characterises the movement of its intentions (*yi*).
3. The knowledge of good and evil characterises its *liang-chih*.
4. The doing of good and avoiding of evil characterises its "investigation of things [i.e. acts]" (*ko-wu*) [14]).

These sentences comprise Yang-ming's well-known "Four Maxims", which, together with his publication of the Old Version of the *Great*

---

13) *WWKC* 2: 110a; Chan, *Instructions,* 141. The story about the hare is from *Han Fei Tzu,* ch. 49, SPTK ed., 19: 1a. English translation by W. K. Liao, *The Complete Works of Han Fei Tzu* (London, 1959), II, 276.

14) *WWKC* 3: 151a-b; Chan, *Instructions,* 243. There are other versions of the "Four Maxims", usually giving the teaching in a slightly different form. But since the accounts of both Ch'ien and Wang Chi coincide — which, indeed, resulted in their disagreement over the interpretation of the First Maxim, it is better to accept the more common version of *wu-shan wu-ô*.

Learning and of Chu Hsi's "mature views", left behind a legacy of controversy which long continued after his death. Certainly, the expression is ambiguous enough to allow a wide diversity of interpretations. If the explanation of *hsin*-in-itself as "a state of equilibrium" is kept in mind, we may seek to understand the first of his "Four Maxims" as referring to *hsin*-in-equilibrium, before it has been aroused (*wei-fa*) by the movement of emotions or desires, which, in turn, explains the second Maxim. According to this interpretation, the third and fourth Maxims treat of *liang-chih,* first as a capacity for the knowledge of the good, and then as a dynamic tendency which follows its own knowledge and judgment, through the method of "investigation of things", that is, of rectifying the mind-and-heart. Thus, it is a method which makes of knowledge, action.

This was essentially the interpretation of Huang Tsung-hsi, who remarked that the absence of good and evil referred to the absence of *thoughts* which may be called good or evil, rather than a description of human nature itself [15]).

At that time, in 1527, Wang Chi and Ch'ien Te-hung already could not agree on a definite interpretation of these Maxims. Ch'ien's great admiration for his Master caused him to consider the words to be part of Yang-ming's sacred teaching in its final form, while Wang Chi regarded them as a "tentative" explanation of *liang-chih,* from which certain logical conclusions can be inferred. Following from the First Maxim, he drew the inference that with the realisation of *hsin*-in itself being "neither good nor evil", will come the understanding that its intentions, its knowledge, and all its acts can and should also be "neither good nor evil".

> If we say that *hsin*-in-itself is characterised by the absence of good and evil, then [we should be able] to say the same of the intentions, of knowledge, and of things [or acts]. And if we say that the [movements of] the intentions are characterised by the presence of good and evil, then, [we should also] say the same of *hsin*-in-itself [16]).

He is speaking here of a complete "transcendence" of the ethical categories of good and evil which occurs with the recognition in one-

---

15) *Ming-ju hsüeh-an,* SPPY ed., 58: 29b.
16) *WWKC* 3: 151b; Chan, *Instructions,* 243: *Wang Lung-hsi hsien-sheng ch'üan-chi,* (1882 ed., Taipei reprint, 1970), 1: 1a-b.

self that *hsin* is, fundamentally speaking, independent of moral judgments while being at the same time the source of such judgments. The best example is of the sage, whose mind-and-heart is so well in tune with ultimate reality—the "highest good" which is beyond good and evil—that he can follow all its dictates without fear of making any moral transgression. But since every man is potentially a sage, the same truth can apply to everyone, provided that he gains this realisation which constitutes the experience of total, inner enlightenment.

On the other hand, Ch'ien has in mind, not enlightenment, but self-cultivation. He sees the First Maxim as expressive of our given *hsin-in-itself*, as it is in the state of "equilibrium", the recovery of which is the objective of all self-cultivation. The following three Maxims would therefore be to him the embodiment of a practically-oriented teaching, aimed at the instruction of all whose hearts are no longer in possession of pristine innocence and purity. The distinction between good and evil should therefore be maintained for the activities of the intentions, for the moral judgment exercised by *liang-chih,* as well as for the practice of "investigation of things" understood as "extension of *liang-chih*"—following always the judgment of our *liang-chih* in our acts. For, "if there were no such distinctions between good and evil, where would there be any need for such effort [of self-cultivation]?" [17])

As the two disciples could not reach an agreement concerning the correct interpretation of the Master's teaching, they raised the issue again in the presence of Yang-ming. The Master told the two that both were right. For him, it was a question, less of doctrine, than of pedagogy. He said that the man of superior intelligence is capable of penetrating at once into the nature of *hsin*-in-itself and is able to unite the internal and external in his efforts of self-cultivation. But for those men whose minds-and-hearts are less open to truth—being hindered by passions—it is more important to learn how to do good and avoid evil in their thoughts and intentions. Gradually, their minds-and-hearts will be rid of impurities, and *hsin-in*-itself will become clear and manifest. He then added that Wang Chi's interpretations were suited for students of superior intelligence, whereas Ch'ien

---

17) *WWKC* 3: 151b; Chan, *Instructions,* 244.

Te-hung's views could be useful to those less endowed. But he warned
that there were few men in the world who would be so intelligent as
not to need making efforts to do good and avoid evil, and have merely
to meditate upon *hsin*-in-itself. Rather, this could lead to the danger of
emptiness and void [18]).

From Yang-ming's other teachings on the problem of evil, and on
the nature of *hsin*-in-itself, there is no difficulty in accepting this
conciliatory reply to both Wang Chi and Ch'ien Te-hung. It would
seem that Wang Chi interpreted all Four Maxims as indicative of a
superior stage of development, and that granted the truth of the
First Maxim, as well as the attainment of a total, inner enlightenment,
one can also say that all the spontaneous functionings of *hsin* should
be as perfect as *hsin* itself, and so need no longer be qualified either
as good or evil. Action, after all, follows being.

Nevertheless, the fact that such a superior state of enlightenment
which brings about a transformation of all a man's interior and
exterior activities may be attained, and that instantaneously, does not
necessarily mean that it will attained by everyone. Just because a sage
can always "follow the dictates of his own heart without transgressing
the Mean" [*Analects* 2:4] does not mean that the ordinary man or
woman can therefore abandon all effort of self-cultivation and merely
follow his or her instinctive desires [19]). The risk is quite obvious.
Yang-ming's awareness of this made him utter the Four Maxims in
their given form, and moved him to counsel the two disciples to give
instruction on these according to the capacity of the student concerned.

> [For] it is not easy to find [many] persons of superior spiritual intelligence.
> Even Yen Hui and [Ch'eng] Ming-tao dared not assume that they could
> [attain a] full realisation of *hsin*-in-itself as soon as they apply themselves
> to the task.... Men's hearts are [usually] governed by [deep-seated] habits.
> If we do not teach them to devote themselves concretely and sincerely to
> the task of doing good and avoiding evil in their *liang-chih* rather than
> merely visualising in a vacuum their [*hsin*-in-itself], what they do cannot
> all be genuine, and what they cultivate will only be an empty and tranquil
> heart. This is no small mistake and should be exposed as early as possible [2]).

---

18) *WWKC* 3: 151b-152a; Chan, *Instructions*, 244-245.

19) *WWKC* 3: 151b; Chan, *Instructions*, 244-245.

20) Given this warning, it is difficult to understand those later men who
appealed to Yang-ming for support of their negligence of self-cultivation, as
well as of the critics who blamed Yang-ming for this negligence.

Yang-ming recognised the existence of a short-cut to wisdom and perfection: in a sudden, instantaneous, penetrating understanding of one's *hsin*-in-itself which constitutes the experience of total enlightenment, and which may elevate the person into a realm beyond that of good and evil for the rest of his life. But he also knew that such an experience, while within reach of everyone, is not at the beck and call of anyone. It comes as a pure gift, to men of usually superior spiritual intelligence, who have kept their minds-and-hearts ready and alert. Nevertheless, for those who wish to perfect themselves, the great Way and the correct path remains that of extending and developing their *liang-chih*, through the acquisition of great sincerity of will and intention, and the conformity of every one of their acts with the inner light given to them all.

Enlightenment is certainly a short-cut to wisdom. But there is no method for inducing this experience. It should not be sought after for its own sake. But enlightenment, and wisdom itself, is present seminally in *liang-chih*. A person needs merely to follow its promptings, attentively but without fear or anxiety, to pre-dispose himself for this gift, should it come. And then, failing its arrival, he can remain confident that wisdom is yet within reach, since wisdom is virtue, and virtue is practised by the extension of *liang-chih*, which slowly makes of one, his *hsin* and ultimate reality, *tao*. And then, once united with ultimate reality, this *hsin* becomes also its own authority, the reason for its having faith in itself, because it is the cause of its own attainment of sagehood and wisdom.

It may be said that Yang-ming advocates a kind of cultivation which is akin to non-cultivation, reminiscent of the ideas of both Chuang-tzu and the Ch'an Buddhists, and basically rooted in faith in the presence and possession within the self of the object of one's desires, hence excluding all anxiety concerning its acquisition. However, to avoid such a proposed method of cultivation becoming mere hypocrisy, a certain delicate balance must be maintained between the quest for ultimate truth or wisdom (*pen-t'i*) and the need for self-exertion (*kung-fu*). While Yang-ming himself offers the example of a life of action permeated by contemplation, many of the restless and eccentric among his latter-day disciples preferred to pass their time in empty speculation on the nature of their *hsin*, without embracing any discipline which a life of cultivation must require. And so, on the one

hand, the notion that the Absolute is neither good nor evil is liberating
to the human spirit, who realises that value judgments are man-made
whereas the real Good is supra-human. On the other hand, any doctrine
of pure enlightenment, when adhered to by an "unenlightened" person,
may result in a complete disregard of all known criteria of truth and
of moral behaviour. In this regard, the history of spirituality in both
East and West can supply us ample evidence.

CONCERNING THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF KOREAN SHAMANISM

BY

JUNG YOUNG LEE
Grand Forks, N. Dak. U.S.A.

CONCERNING THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF KOREAN SHAMANISM

The origin of Korean shamanism is uncertain. Thus Eliade con-
cludes, "It is difficult to determine the 'origin' of Korean shaman-
ism." [1] This difficulty lies primarily in its complexity. The diver-
sification of shamanistic practices according to different provinces
makes it difficult to find the unifying source of its origin. A serious
attempt was made at the end of the Yi Dynasty to unify the different
systems of shamanism, but it did not succeed. [2] Perhaps the diver-
sification of the religion is well summarized by Hulbert as a religion
of the mosaic. [3] Moreover, according to Akamatzu, Korean shaman-
ism is the most thoroughgoing synthesis of Taoism and Buddhism. [4]
These two higher forms of religion became united with shamanism so
intimately that it is almost impossible to separate them. We will see
how much the contemporary form of shamanism is affected by these
religions. Since it is almost impossible to trace the origin of shamanism,
from the appearance of contemporary shamanism, it is best to approach
it from a study of myths or legends which have something to do with
its origin. We will select a few prominent and reliable ones, among
many, and examine them as much as possible in their historical con-

---

1) Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstacy* (New York:
Bollingen Foundation, 1964), p. 462.

2) The wife of the last king of the Yi Dynasty, Queen Min, a devout believer
in shamanism, raised the cult to the highest place in her palace. She attempted to
organize the cult of the whole nation under a centralized system by raising Yi
Chi Yong to the rank of princess. When the Queen was murdered by the Japanese
in 1895, all of this came to an end.

3) See Homber Hulbert, *The Passing of Korea* (New York: Doubleday and
Company, 1906), Chapter XXX.

4) See Akamatzu Chijo and Akiba Tokashi *Chusen Fuzuk no Kenkyu,* Vol. II
(Seoul, 1938), Chapter 12.

texts. However, before we analyze these myths or legends, let us first clarify our understanding of shamanism in Korea.

Korean shamanism in our times is almost exclusively identified with terms like *Mutang* and *Pansoo*. *Pansoo,* the male shaman, occupies an insignificant place in Korean shamanism, while *Mutang,* the female shaman or shamaness, occupies its mainstream. Therefore, Korean shamanism in general means the cult of *Mutang*. Before the Korean alphabet everything was written in Chinese. Therefore, the Chinese words *"Mu"* or *"Mutang"* have been applied to indicate shamanism. It is commonly believed that the word *"Mu"* alone was used to designate shamanism in early writings. *Mu* etymologically means "the one who performs miracles" or "the performance of miracles." 5) Therefore, *Mu* alone is sufficient to indicate the shamaness or the shaman as far as its usage is concerned. However, the word "Tang" was believed to be added to it later. *Tang* means an altar, which should not be confused with the word *"Jyul"* or *"Sa,"* which means the temple.6) We do not know exactly when the word *"Tang"* was added to the *"Mu"* in the development of Korean shamanism. However, from a historical point of view there is a Chinese document, *San Hai Kyeng* (about the first century A.D.), which had already mentioned the existence of the cult of *Mu* around the area of Mt. Paiktu (Mt. Whitehead), which is located on the northern tip of the Korean peninsula. 7) It appears again in the earliest Korean document, *Samkŭk-Saki* or the History of the Three Kingdoms, which was written in the twelfth century. 8) During the Yi Dynasty we find that the use of *Mutang,* instead of *Mu,* becomes apparent. 9) As we have already indicated, the Chinese characters for *Mutang* mean the altar or shrine of *Mu* or shaman. It is possible that the location of the shamanistic altar came to be identified with a shamaness herself.

---

5) It is not a good translation to say that *Mu* means "deceiving." See Allen Clark's translation in his *Religions of Old Korea* (N.Y., Fleming H. Revell Co., 1932), pp. 183-4.

6) *Tang* does not mean Clark's notion of "company" (Ibid). It is also different from *Sa* or temple. Even Prof. Paul Y. U. Park fails to make this distinction. See his "A Study on the Relation of Shamanism to other Religions" in *Korean Religions,* Vol. 2, No. 1 (Jan. 1970), p. 13.

7) *Ibid.*

8) It appears in the narrative of King Ruri of Kokuryŏ: "When, in the ninth month of his nineteenth year's reign, the King was ill, he called the priest "Mu" to find out the cause of his illness." See *Samkŭk-Saki,* Kokuryŏ Kingdom.

9) Paul Y. U. Park, *op. cit.*

However, it is also believed that the term *"Mutang"* may be uniquely a Korean word to indicate shaman or shamaness. [10]) Since there was no Korean language available until Sae Jong King of Yi Dunasty, the Chinese word *"Mu"* was used to signify *"Mutang"* in Korean in early writings. As Akiba points out, *Mutang* of Korean shamanism may not be identified with *Mutang* in Chinese. The word *"Mutang"* might be derived from the Ural-Altaic people who called the female shaman *"utagan"* or *"utakan."* [11]) However, it is questionable how the letter "M" was added to the Ural-Altaic name for the female shaman. Therefore, this theory that the word *"Mutang"* had its origin in the Ural-Altaic notion of the female shaman is not conclusive. Whatever the origin of this word, the female shaman came to be known in Korea as a *Mutang.* Even though *Mutang* usually means the female shaman, it is not exclusively limited to her. It often means both the female and the male shaman. Thus in the Seoul area, the male shaman is often called *Sana-Mutang,* or "male *Mutang,"* instead of *"Pansoo."* In the Pyungyang area he is often called *Paksa-Mutang,* or "doctor-*Mutang."* In the northwestern province it is abbreviated to *Paksa,* dropping the last word *"Mutang."* However, it is reasonable to believe that the word *"Paksa"* is more authentic than *"Paksa-Mutang,"* which is another name for *"Sana-Mutang"* or male-Mutang. In other words, Paksa or doctor came to be known as *Paksa-Mutang* because of the prevalence of *Mutang* or the female shaman. However, the word *Paksa* might be the Chinese adaptation of *Pansoo* which was originally a Korean name for the male shaman. As Hakutori points out, the Korean word *"Pansoo"* may come from the Ural-Altaic name for the male shaman who was called many different names such as *"baksi,"* *"balsi,"* or *"bahsih."* [12]) If we believe the word *"Pansoo"* had its origin in the Ural-Altaic people, no doubt the word *"Paksa"* came from an imitation of the sound in Chinese. Therefore, we may be able to conclude that there are fundamentally two kinds of shamans: the *Mutang* or the female shaman and *Pansoo* or the male shaman, even though there are many different names by which they have been called. However,

---

10) Akamatzu Chijo and Akiba Tokashi, *op. cit.,* p. 27.

11) Torii Rygho, *Nihon-Chuikyminsuck-no-Kensichukyo,* pp. 108-9; A. C. Clark, *op. cit.,* p. 183-4.

12) Hakutori Kurayoshi, "Chosengo-to-Ural-Altai-go-tono-Hikyo-Kenkyu" in *Toyogaku-Bo,* No. 5.

they are not identical with Korean shamans as they had been under-
stood in early days. Perhaps the predominance of shamanesses or
Mutangs in Korean shamanism in recent centuries inevitably created
an impression that the *Mutang* and Korean shamanism are synonymous.
Nowadays the difference between Korean shamans and *Mutang* is
hardly questioned.

To summarize, the most probable hypothesis is that the words
"*Mutang*" and "*Pansoo*" are Korean names, rather than Chinese,
adopted from the shamanistic tradition of the Ural-Altaic people. This
kind of hypothesis is much more reasonable than to presume that they are
Chinese, since Chinese civilization affected Korea much later than the
existence of shamanism in Korea. Korea did not have her own written
language for a long time after its foundation. Therefore Korea had
to borrow Chinese characters to express the oral traditions of Korean
shamanism. The earliest record we have, as we have already indicated,
is the *Samkŭk-Saki* or the History of Three Kingdoms which was
written about the 12th century A.D. It is none other than an inter-
pretation of the existing traditions of Korea in Chinese language. We
must go back to the oral traditions to understand native shamanism.
That is why it is important to examine the myths and legends which
deal with the origin and development of Korean shamanism. However,
let us first make a clear distinction between traditional shamanism
and the cult of *Mutang*. As we have indicated, they are not identical
even though they are often used synonymously in our times. Traditional
shamanism has been known as *Shin-Kyo* which literally means the
religion of spirits. [13]) On the other hand, the cult of *Mutang* is a
form of this religion of spirits. Here, *Mutang* and "*Mu*" or "*Wu*"
are almost synonymous. [14]) Arthur Waley defines *Mu* as follows:
"In ancient China intermediaries used in the cult of Spirits were
called *wu*." [15]) Also *Wu* (or *Mu*) refers primarily to the female sha-
man even though it also applies to all shamans irrespective of their
sex. [16]) If we define *Mutang* or shamanesses as the intermediaries
following Waley's definition, traditional shamanism in Korea is iden-

---

13) Kim Tuk-hwang, *op. cit.,* pp. 40ff.
14) The Korean pronunciation of the Chinese word "*wu*" is "*mu*."
15) Arthur Waley, *The Nine Songs* (London: George Allen and Unwin,
1955), p. 9.
16) *Ibid.,* p. 18.

tical with the "cult of spirits," through which the *Wu* or *Mutang* works. Therefore, *Mutang* is always relative to traditional shamanism or *Shin-Kyo*. If we examine myths or legends we will see the evolvement of *Mutang* or shamaness within the national faith of *Shin-Kyo* or the shamanistic cult of spirits. The main characteristic of this shamanistic cult is the faith in *Hanunim* or the Heavenly King as the highest God of all other gods in nature. [17]) We will see how closely this cult is related to the foundation of Korea and the national faith which perpetuated to people in a deteriorated form of shamanism, the cult of *Mutang*. To understand this, let us turn to myths which deal with the origin of the shamanistic cult of *Mutang*.

Let us first begin with the myths or legends which have something to do with the origin of *Mutang*, the female shamans in Korea. There are many different legends or myths dealing with the origin of *Mutang*, but let us limit ourselves to the few which represent the main tradition of Korean shamanism. One of them deals with a holy mother as the ancestor of *Mutang*. The story of the Holy Mother as the beginning of *Mutang* is connected with a man by the name of Bupǔ-Whasang, who appears in a book known as *Muyǔ-Sockgo* by an unknown author.[18]) In this book it is said that Bupǔ-Whasang, who lived at Hamyang during the middle of Silra kingdom, possessed eight girls. All of them departed in different directions and practiced shamanism. Again we see the detailed story of Bupǔ-Whasang in connection with the Holy Mother in Lee Nungwha's study on Korean shamanism. "According to tradition, there was a man known as Bupǔ-Whasang in Kowum-chun temple on Mt. Chiri. One day he took a walk at leisure. Suddenly he saw a mountain torrent without rain. Thinking where the flood originated, he looked up the peak of Heavenly King. There he saw a tall and strong woman, who called herself the Holy Mother of Heavenly King. She became a human being and married to him according to the divination performed through water. They bore eight girls who were taught various techniques of shamanism, and taught to praise the Amida Buddha and call upon the name of Bupǔ-Whasang. They later spread shamanism all over the country." [19]) Lee further indicates

17) Paul Y. U. Park, *op. cit.,* p. 15.
18) Akamatzu Chijo and Akiba Tokashi, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 1.
19) Lee Nungwha, *Chosen Musock Ko* (Studies in Korean Shamanism), *Muhang Sinsa Mungmock* (in the chapter of myths dealing with shamanistic affairs), p. 44.

that "the Holy Mother of Heavenly King is identical with the God of
Mt. Chiri." [20]) From this legend or myth we notice that the symbol
of the mountain, mother god or the Holy Mother, became the ancestor
of today's *Mutangs*. However, the appearance of Amida Buddha in
this story indicates that it originated sometime after Buddhism came
to Korea. In other words, the origin of *Mutang* in this story is implied
as being sometime during the middle of the Silra Kingdom, as the
Muyŭ-Sockgo attempts to describe.

Let us look at the legend of the princess which deals with the origin
of *Mutang*. This story is the most popular and best known to *Mutangs*.
Also it differs according to different places. Therefore, let us first
take the story known in the central part or Kyungki province where
Seoul is located. The legend is known in this area as the story of
"Ǎwhang-Kongchu" or the princess of Yaŏ who is believed to have
reigned 2357-2255 B.C. in China. According to this story, peace and
prosperity prevailed in China during the Yaŏ reign because of her
prayers to Heaven for the people. Occasionally people could avoid the
various disasters of fire and flood through her intercessory prayers.
Since the King knew the power of her prayers, he sent her among the
people to assist them in any way she could. People began to notice her
spiritual power and almost worshipped her. Soon altars were dedicated
to her by her followers, who later succeeded her and became *Mutangs*.
Therefore, she became the founder of the cult of *Mutang*. In this
story the ancestor of *Mutangs* is dedicated to the princess of the
mystical king of China, Yaŏ. We often see that she is honored at the
ritual of seasonal offerings in Chungchun province. *Mutangs* wear the
yellow and red clothes, which are regarded as Ǎwhang-Kongch's
robes, at the ritual. However, in this area she is often regarded as
the princess of the Koryŏ King rather than that of Yao in China. [21])

In the Seoul area the princess is known as "Pali-Kongchu," who
was thrown out of the palace and became the ancestor of *Mutangs*.
In the northern province, particularly in the Hamhung area, she is
known as Chil-Kongchu (Seventh Princess) or Ilgopche-Buliduck
(Seventh Princess) who was cast out by the king. The story of the
seventh princess seems to meet the ethos of *Mutangs*. It is the story

---

20) *Ibid.*
21) Akamatzu Chijo and Akiba Tokashi, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 4.

Picture I
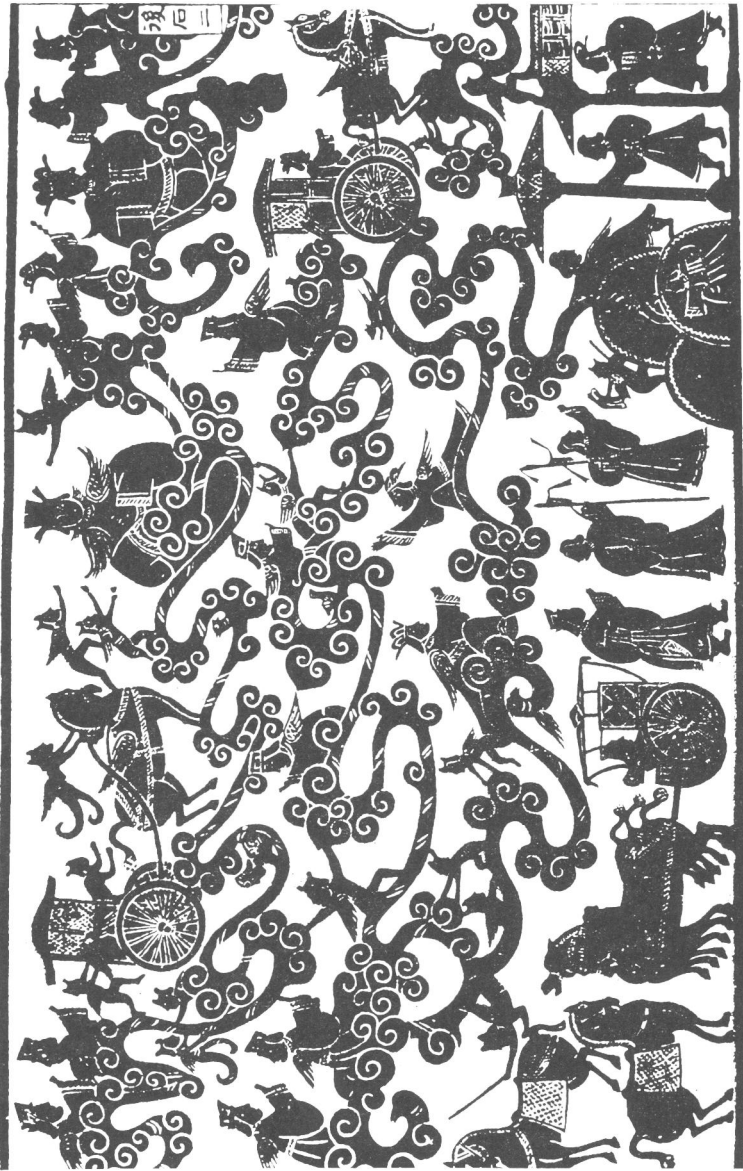
武氏祠堂　後石室　第二石　第二層

of the rejected princess. In early days there was a king who did not have a son, only girls. When the seventh daughter was born, he was greatly angered and put her in a stone box and cast it in a pond. However, Heaven sent a Dragon King to rescue her from the pond and take her to heaven. When she was about fourteen years of age, she came down to earth and learned that her mother was critically ill. She went far away to the Western sky and brought medicine water and saved her mother from death. In this story the medicine water or Yacksu becomes the center of shamanistic power. In fact the princess is often identified with the spirit of this medicine water. Thus people often visit the spring of medicine water and listen to the running water as though it were the voice of the princess. [22])

In Kyungsang-Namdo area the princess is known as "Kongsim." According to this legend, the princess became insane. Thus she was thrown out of the palace and came to Mt. South, which is in the south of Seoul. However, because she disturbed many people in Seoul, the king decided to send her off with enough food and a maid to the highest peak of Mt. Diamond which is located in Kangwun province. In a dream at the mountain she had a vision of a crane with blue and white wings coming into her mouth. She closed her mouth tightly so that the crane was kept in her body. Later she conceived a child by the crane and gave birth to twin boys. They grew up and became great ministers under her father's rule. Both of them married and each had four girls. All the eight girls became *Mutangs* and were sent in different directions to assist the people through healings and believing in spirits. Since that time the rejected princess, their grandmother, was honored as an ancestor of *Mutangs*. The symbolic number "eight" or "eight girls" represents the eight provinces which represent all of Korea. Korea consists of eight provinces, so the eight girls represent the spread of shamanism all over the country.

According to Murayama's study, [23]) two gods became the ancestors of *Mutangs* in the southern province of Julanamdo. There were the male god, who was the first prince in Korea, and the female god, who was the daughter of this prince. She was later known as Kongsim.

---

22) Akiba Tokashi, "Yakusui Singho no Ichimen" (An Aspect of Faith in the Medicine Water) in *Minsuk-Gaku* (The Study of Folklore), Volume I, No. 5.
23) Murayama Chiyashi, *Chosen-no-Mugcki* (Korean Shamanism) (Seoul, 1927), p. 497.

One day Kongsim, the princess, was critically ill and almost became insane. Her father, the first prince, called all the well-known doctors but it was no use. As a result he allowed her to carry out her strange prayers and meditations in one corner of the palace. She was confined to a room with dark curtains so that no one could notice her other than her maid. The maid was inspired by her unending devotion to prayer and finally learned how to pray herself. Later the maid spread the efficacy of her prayers to the people. The king later realized the power of the princess and released her from confinement and proclaimed the effectiveness of her spiritual power. Through the maid shamanism spread all over the country. From that time on the princess was honored as the ancestor of *Mutangs.*

Let us deal with one more story which attributes the origin of shamanistic practice to a king. This story was told in the Pyungyang area by one of the old *Mutangs* known by the name of Hyunsick. According to her story,[24]) King Yü, the founder of the Hsia dynasty in 2205 B.C., had already believed in shamanism. Thus the king invited both the male and female shamans to his courthouse and asked them to pray for his health and long life. Thus the shamans began to praise the king by saying "Long live King Yü!" However, according to another *Mutang,* Kim Boku, the story is a little bit different. It is questionable whether the king was the Chinese legendary figure of Yü. However, the king was more interested in the male shaman or *Pansoo* than the female shaman or *Mutang.* One day the king called a *Pansoo* and a *Mutang* each to the court and asked them to stop the strange noise coming from the empty well behind the courthouse. The king announced that he would reward the one who could stop the noise, and punish the one who failed to stop it. On the first evening the female shaman or *Mutang* was asked to perform magic to stop the noise. She went out to the old well and danced around it with singing. However, the noise did not stop because the king had thrown people into the well to create the noise. On the next evening again the strange noise was heard. This time the male shaman or *Pansoo* was asked to stop the noise. When the *Pansoo* finished a reading from one of the sacred books, the noise suddenly stopped and never came back again. The king not only rewarded the *Pansoo,* but promoted his

---

24) Akamatzu Chijo and Akiba Tokashi, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 15.

work all over the country. At the same time the *Mutang* was not only
condemned to death but the king pronounced a decree to capture all the
Mutangs in the country. As soon as the edict went out, the *Mutangs*
began to flee the country. When they came to a great river which pre-
vented them from crossing, a ruler of that province, whose name was
Ăwhang, sympathized with them and provided them with a ship. When
the ship was about in the middle of the river, a *Mutang* known by the name
of Hanyangsang praised Ăwhang saying, "Long live Ăwhang!" She
cheered him three times. Later Ăwhang became the king and asked all
the *Mutangs* to return to practice shamanism in the country. That is
perhaps why still in Pyungan Namdo province the *Mutang* cheers
Ăwhang, saying, "Long live Ăwhang" in certain rituals. Even though
this story is not directly related to the origin of shamanism, it is im-
portant in the development of shamanim. What the story attempts to
say is that the origin of shamanistic practice goes back to the king,
the founder of the nation. We see the importance of the *Mutang*'s
cheer, "Long live Ăwhang!" in the history of shamanism. For example,
Lee Bin describes it as follows: "When the ship came to the middle
of the deep water, it came to the verge of sinking from the great
waves which threatened to overwhelm it. In the ship a Buddhist Monk
gave a prayer to Buddha. A blind man, or *Pansoo,* and a doctor also
offered their prayers. The *Mutang* gave a prayer saying "Long live
Ăwhang!" When the ship arrived safely at its destination, a Confucian
standing on the shore said that the prayers of all saved the ship. [25])
Lyu also indicates the magical charm inherent in the phrase "Long
live Ăwhang!" He said that today the *Pansoo* and *Mutang* call "Long
live Ăwhang!" because it saved hundreds of people who migrated from
China in early days. [26]) There the legend came to be associated with
King Ăwhang who came to be known as the propagator of *Mutangs*
and *Pansoos* in Korea.

Let us now attempt to summarize the myths or legends which we
have examined. In all these stories which we have indicated there is an
implication that the ancestors of *Mutangs* are not self-ordained priests,
but mediums or intermediaries of the highest form of spirits. In other
words, one of the main characteristics of those who initiated *Mutang*

25) Lee Bin, *Songyungman-Rock* (*Daidongyasun,* Vol. 11), p. 117.
26) Lyu Mong-un, *Uhyu-Yadam*: Quoted by Lee Nungwha, *Chuson Musock Ko* (Seoul, 1927), p. 40.

is a heavenly ordination. We see in the story of Chil-Kongchu that she was rescued by the Heavenly King who sent the Dragon King to bring her back to the heavenly place. She later came down to earth as a *Mutang* to restore her mother's health. We also notice the significance of the Heavenly King in the story of the holy woman at Mt. Chiri. She appeared at the peak of Heavenly King and called herself the Holy Mother of the Heavenly King. She became a human being and married according to the will of heaven (divination) and gave birth to eight girls who became *Mutangs*. Again the *Mutangs* are regarded as direct descendants of the Heavenly King. In the story of Äwhang-Kongchu we also observe the prayer of the princess to Heaven or the Heavenly Spirit to protect her people from diseases and sufferings. Thus King Yaŏ was able to bring peace and prosperity to his people. Here one of the most important characteristics is the direct relation of the Heavenly Spirit with the function of shamans, who are regarded not only as direct descendants of the Heavenly King but to be heavenly ordained to carry out the work for the people.

The second characteristic, which is also related to the first, is the kingly origin of *Mutangs* and *Pansoos*. In other words, Mutangs and Pansoos, who are now regarded as the lowest class of people in Korea, claimed in these stories that their origin was the kingly family, the highest class of people. In all the stories we have examined there is not the slightest indication that their origin was not from the highest family, the kingly or princely home. In almost all cases the ancestors of *Mutangs* were princesses who were either mistreated or unfortunate. The Äwhang-Kongchu was the princess of Yaŏ, the great and mystical figure who ruled China before civilization. The Pali-Kongchu is also the seventh princess of a tyrant king who is not known. The Kongsim was a daughter of a prince. Moreover, to the great legendary King Yü, the founder of pre-Chinese civilization, is attributed the origin of shamanistic development. To summarize, what the stories attempt to say is that the origin of *Mutangs* came from the princesses of the highest rulers of the earth, the great kings who founded the great civilizations in the past.

The third characteristic of the originators of *Mutangs* is their close association with mountains. As we have already noticed, the Holy Mother was manifested in Mt. Chiri. The outcast princess went to Mt. South and finally to Mt. Diamond where she conceived her twin

Picture II

武氏祠堂 後石室 第三石
（上第三層・下第四層）

sons by the crane in her dream. The close relationship between moun-
tains and *Mutangs* is clearly expressed in the existing shamanistic
altars on the mountain sides. However, as to the origin of *Mutangs,*
mountains, particularly Mt. South, became the birthplace of Kongsim.
In many provinces the *Mutang* usually begins the ritual of seasonal
offerings with a phrase indicating that Kongsim's original place is
Mt. South. In the Tongyung area Mt. South-West becomes the birth-
place of Kongsim. In Sunchun of the southern province, the birth-
place or *Bŏn* of Kongsim is regarded as Mt. South. Again, in the
Rachu, Mockpo and Namwun areas the birthplace of Kongsim is
understood as Mt. South. [27] Therefore, certain mountains became
not only symbols of sacred presence, but the birthplace of shamanism.

The fourth characteristic of the stories we have examined deals
with the tragedy of those who initiated *Mutangs.* In almost all cases
the originators of *Mutangs* go through somewhat unusual experiences
which are associated with unfortunate events or tragedies. Look at
the daughter of the prince who became almost insane because of illness.
Or, we see the princess who was cast out by a tyrant king because
she was simply born as his seventh daughter. These stories attempt
to depict the painful process of shamanistic initiation which is an ex-
perience of ordeals or tragedies. In most cases those who are becoming
Mutangs have to go through a kind of psychic turnover through a
serious illness or visions. [28] Therefore, it is possible that the tragic
experiences of those who have originated *Mutangs* might be reflected
in the experiences of those who are later initiated as *Mutangs.*

Finally, the fifth characteristic of the myths or legends concerning
the origins of *Mutangs* is the predominance of women. In almost all
cases it is not men but women who became the ancestors of *Mutangs.*
Except for the Holy Mother of the Heavenly King, we have noticed
that the origin of *Mutangs* is attributed to princesses. Since there are
more female shamans than male shamans in Korea, it is perhaps natural
to elevate women as their ancestors. However, in the Cheju Island
where there are more male shamans than female shamans, their
ancestors are known as men. According to the legend in this island,
it was the son of Kim Cha-su, rather than the princess, who later

---

27) Akamatzu Chijo and Akiba Tokashi, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 13.
28) *Ibid.,* pp. 56ff.

became the ancestor of both *Mutangs* and *Pansoos.*[29]) Therefore,
the appearance of princesses and the holy woman as the ancestors of
Mutangs could be attributed to the predominance of female shamans
in Korea.

We may now conclude our observations of these myths or legends
dealing with the origin of *Mutangs*. From our observations we may
be able to fix the dates for these stories. It is, of course, difficult to
believe that all these stories originated in the same period. However,
it is reasonable to fix their dates sometime at the end of the Three
Kingdoms when Buddhism and Taoism flourished. The occasional
mention of Buddha in these stories indicates that Buddhism was well
accepted and became part of Korean life. Buddhism came to Korea
about the end of the fourth century. According to the history of the
Three Kingdoms, Buddhism was first introduced to Kokuyŏ by a
Chinese monk known by the name of Bŭ-gyun in the second year of
So-Sulim, who himself accepted the monk with his followers.[30])
Since that time Buddhism was widely accepted by the ruling classes.
Perhaps some of these stories were told by *Mutangs* to supplement
their inferior feelings during the Three Kingdoms when Buddhism
was at its peak. Moreover, we find that some of the stories mention
the founding rulers of China such as Yaŏ and Yü as the ancestors of
Mutangs. This indicates that Korean civilization at that time was
deeply influenced by the Chinese people. They attempted to link their
heritage to the founding rulers of the Great China. However, behind
all these utilitarian motives there was, I think, the fundamental motive
of restoring the traditional faith of *Shin-Kyo* or the cult of spirits
to which *Mutangs* eventually belong. In this respect, Eliade is perhaps
right when he said "The present predominance of shamanesses in
Korea may be the result either of a deteriorattion in traditional shaman-
ism or of influences from the south."[31]) It was possible, because of
the Buddhist influence to the ruling classes of people, that the tradi-
tional shamanism deteriorated as the female shamans took a prominent
role in shamanism. Perhaps the stories were told by them to recover
the traditional shamanism. In other words, the deterioration of tra-

---

29) See Akitba Tokashi, "Saichudo ni Okelu Shaki no Shinko" (The faith
in the Snake-spirit in Cheju Island) in *Ahooka Gakushu,* No. 7.
  30) *Samkuk-Saki,* Vol. 18.
  31) Eliade, *op. cit.*

ditional shamanism through the influence of magic and divinations was already evident in the time when these stories were told. We see their conscious attempts to link their heritage to the traditional shamanism which was initiated by Dan-Gun, the son of the Heavenly Prince and the founder of the Korean nation, who was also regarded as a great shaman. [32]) As we have already indicated, these stories attempted to demonstrate that their shamanistic practice was originally ordained by the Heavenly King and had its origin in the family of the founding ruler. Thus these myths already presuppose the existence of the most influential myth of Dan-Gun which deals with the foundation of traditional shamanism. Therefore, let us focus our attention on the myth of Dan-Gun in our effort to understand the origin of traditional shamanism in Korea.

The myth of Dan-Gun had been transmitted by word of mouth for many generations before it was finally written down. We find the myth in *Samkŭk-Yusa* or the Remanent History of Three Kingdoms which was written sometime at the end of the thirteenth century. The story of Dan-Gun in this book begins with *"Wei-Ki* (or Wei writing) says" or *"Ko-Ki* (or the old writing) says." We do not know what these documents were when this history was written. We only presume that what was written in these documents was recorded faithfully in the Remanent History of Three Kingdoms. In other words, prior existence of these documents concerning the myth of Dan-Gun is clearly evident. Let us then examine what these documents attempt to say in regard to Dan-Gun.

The following is the story described in the Remanent History of Three Kingdoms:

> There was once a wise and brave prince, Hwan-Ung by name, son of the Heavenly King. The Prince asked his father to grant him the Beautiful Peninsula of Korea to govern. The King granted his wish, and he was dispatched to the Earth, bearing three Heavenly Seals, and accompanied by three thousand followers. The Heavenly Prince arrived under the sacred sandalwood tree on the Tebeg Mountains, and ascended the throne. There he established the Sacred City. There were three ministers to carry out his orders, Pung-Beg (Earl Wind), W-Sa (Chancellor Rain), and Un-Sa (Chancellor Cloud), who were charged with the supervision of about three hundred and sixty officials who controlled all things, such as grain, life, sickness, the determination of good and evil. At that time a bear and a tiger

---

32) Kim Tuk-hwang, *op. cit.,* p. 40; C. A. Clark, *op. cit.,* p. 176.

were living in a big cave near the sandalwood tree. They wished ardently
that they could become human beings ... They prayed earnestly that their wish
might be granted. The bear patiently endured weariness and hunger, and
after twenty-one days became a beautiful woman, but the tiger ran away
for it could not tolerate long days sitting quietly in the cave. The woman was
overjoyed, and visiting the sandalwood again she prayed that she might
become the mother of a child. Her ardent wish was appreciated, and before
long she became Queen and gave birth to a prince who was given the royal
name Dan-Gun, or the Sandalwood King. The people of the country rejoiced
at the birth of the prince, Dan-Gun, who reigned afterwards as the first
human king of the peninsula. When he came to the throne he established
a new capital at Pyungyang, and gave the kingdom the name of Zoson
(Choson—Land of Morning Calm) ... It is said that When Dan-Gun abdicated
and left his throne to the next King he became a San-sin (Mountain God). [33])

Almost an identical description of Dan-Gun's myth is found in *Jew-
hang-Umki* by Lee Sung-hyu (1224-1300 A.D.?) It was believed to be
written about ten years after the Remanent History of Three King-
doms. In *Jewhang-Umki* the story of Dan-Gun is rather concise but
explicit to the life of Dan-Gun. One of the obvious differences in
Lee's description from the Remanent History of Three Kingdoms
is the birth of Dan-Gun by the granddaughter of Heavenly King
rather than by the bear-mother. [34]) However, the content as a whole
supports the authenticity of the myth of Dan-Gun in the Remanent
History of Three Kingdoms. In later writings, particularly in the
early Yi Dynasty, the myth of Dan-Gun in the *Ko-Ki,* or the
Writings of the Old, had reappeared. [35]) However, there is no
way to verify its authenticity because its very nature is a myth which
has to prove itself. There is no doubt that this myth has been deeply
imprinted in the minds of the Korean people since the beginning of
their history. Thus Koreans are often called the children of Dan-Gun
or the race of the Sandalwood. In this respect King Dan-Gun is com-
pared with Jimmu Tenno in Japan. Just as the latter became the first
human emperor in Japan, Dan-Gun became the first human king of
Korea and his image became the archetype of the Korean people.

---

33) This is Zong In-Sob's translation in his *Folk Tales From Korea* (Seoul:
Hollym Corporation, 1970), pp. 3-4.

34) Kim Jae-won, *Dan-Gun Shinwhahe Shin-Yungku* (Recent Studies in the
Myth of Dan-Gun) (Seoul, 1947), p. 14.

35) The Writings of the Old concerning the myth of Dan-Gun again appear
in *Saejong Dawhang Silrock* (The Actual Records of Saejong King), *Chiri-Chi,
Pyungyang Cho* (In the section of Pyungyang in the Record of Geography).

Thus it is not the question to either prove or disprove the reality of this myth. Rather it is the myth which lives in the life of the Korean people. Any attempt to prove its objectivity fails to realize the deeper meaning underlying its living reality. So it is unnecessary to present here countless debates on the verification of this myth. [36]) Rather it is more feasible to discuss the significance of this living reality in order to understand the origin of traditional shamanism which is known as *Shin-Kyo* or the Religion of Spirits.

Before we make any definite conclusions as to the origin of traditional shamanism in this myth, let us attempt to characterize it as much as possible. First of all, the myth presents Dan-Gun as a direct descendant of the Heavenly King. He is the son of Shan-Ung, who is the prince of the Heavenly King, who is known by the name of Whan-In. His relation to the Heavenly King is more precisely recorded in Lee Sung-hyu's *Jewhang-Umki* in the thirteenth century. The record of Dan-Gun in this book begins with his relation to Korea and his grandfather: "He who has founded this nation is the grandson of the Heavenly King, who is known by name of Dan-Gun." [37]) This direct linkage of Dan-Gun with the Heavenly King establishes the authority of his leadership. As we have already pointed out, he is not really different from Jimmu Tenno who was regarded as the direct descendant of Amaterasu Oh-mikami or Sun Goddess in Japan. Dan-Gun is the incarnation of Heavenly Being or Spiritual Being, for his father was a spirit known as Hwang-Ung by name and his mother was formerly a bear who later became a woman to conceive him. We remember the same imagery in the story of Kongsim, the outcast princess, who conceived her twin boys through a crane coming into her mouth in a dream. Here the crane is symbolized as the Spiritual Being. In this sense Dan-Gun is the symbol of Intermediary or Mediator between the spiritual world of Heaven and the material world of earth. If we define the shaman as the intermediary of spiritual beings.[38])

---

36) See Imase Lyu's *Dangkun-ko* (Reflections on Dan-Gun) in *Chosen Kosi no Kenkyu* (Studies in the Ancient History of Korea); Chae Nom-sun, ed., *Sinchung Samkŭk Yusa* (Recent Critics on the Remanent History of Three Kingdoms), Seoul, 1946, pp. 42ff.; Kim Jae-Won, *op. cit.*

37) The alternative translation can be: "Who is the one who opened the nation and led the wind and clouds? He is the grandson of the highest King, known by the name of Dan-Gun." See Kim Jae-Won, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

38) See A. Waley, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Dan-Gun is the archetype of shamans. In him both the spiritual being
and the material being are brought together in his incarnation. In him
the direct and immediate expression of the highest spiritual being is
manifest. Thus he is the archetype of shamans. We see then quite
clearly why the myths or legends dealing with the origin of *Mutangs*
attempt to connect their heritage to the Heavenly King and the found-
ing ruler of the nation. To be a shaman means to be an intermediary
to spiritual beings, and to be the intermediary means to be the arche-
type of mediation. Without this archetype, that is, without Dan-Gun,
there is no way to draw the authenticity of shamanistic power. There-
fore, Dan-Gun becomes the cornerstone of all forms of shamanistic
expressions. He becomes the archetypical symbol of both *Mutangs* and
Pansoos as well as traditional shamanism, which lost its essence through
the influence of Buddhism and Taoism in a later period of Korean
history.

Secondly, the idea of direct linkage of Dan-Gun with the Heavenly
King led the people to believe in *Hanunim* or Heavenly King as the
highest God of all other gods. This is a characteristic of traditional
shamanism which prevailed down to this time. Thus Kyung Cho
Chung concludes, "Shamanism (Shinkyo) signifies one god (*Hanu-
nim*), which embraces the idea of one supreme mind." [39]) Certainly,
the faith in *Hanunim* or the Heavenly King is the most important
characteristic of *Shin-Kyo* or traditional shamanism. Kim Tuk-hwang
attempts to summarize the essence of *Shin-Kyo* as the religion of
believing in the Heavenly God as the highest of all gods. However,
Mr. Kim calls it "Shamanism" because of its primitive character. [40])
He seems to realize that *Shin-Kyo* is much broader than the so-called
shamanism. Thus it is not fair to identify it with *Mutangs* or *Pansoos*
only, as we have already pointed out. It involves the religious dimen-
sion of faith in the highest god. Yet this highest god or *Hanunim* is
purely spiritual and the shaman has to be the intermediary in order
to communicate with him. In other words, Dan-Gun was the great
shaman through whom the intimate relationship between Heavenly
Spirit and earthly life was possible. Since he was capable of com-
munion with the Heavenly Spirit, he was the one who initiated the

---

39) His *Korea Tomorrow: Land of the Morning Calm* (New York: The
Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 53.
40) *Hanguk Johnkyo-Sa* (History of Korean Religions), pp. 16-17.

worship of the Heavenly King. Chae Nam-sun points out that Dan-Gun worshipped and prayed to the Heavenly King on behalf of his people, the Koreans, and taught them that the service to him alone is the highest duty of all people. [41]) Perhaps Dan-Gun's worship of his grandfather as the Highest God of all gods might have been not only the basis for their faith in one God of *Hanunim,* but also the basic motive for the worship of ancestral spirits in later days. Because the idea of the Heavenly King was given the most important place in the myth of Dan-Gun, Kim Jae-won believes that the word "Dan-Gun" might be derived from the Mongolian word "tenger," which means Heaven as well as the shaman who mediates Heavenly spirits. [42]) In some provinces of Korea a shaman is still called "tangur tangur-ai." [43]) The importance of this faith in *Hanunim* or Heavenly King is unquestionable to *Mutangs.* As we have already pointed out, the stories dealing with the origin of *Mutangs* imply that their works are ordained by Him. The faith in *Hanunim* is not only of *Mutangs* but is the core of national faith. Akiba believes that this faith in *Hanunim* in the heart of religions in Korea. [44]) Therefore, this faith, as Mr. Chung says, "has been rooted in the Korean mind for so many centuries that its concepts remain a potent force in daily living." [45])

This lofty faith in *Hanunim* or the Heavenly King, which was introduced by the founder of the nation, Dan-Gun himself, gave birth to the Trinitarian idea of Heavenly God. This idea is implicit in the myth of Dan-Gun, but developed later when Dan-Gun himself became *San-Sin* or Mountain God. Thus Zong In-sob adds the following accounts to the myth of Dan-Gun: "He later moved the capital to Mount Asadal (now Mt. Guwol in Hwang-He Province), where there is now a shrine called Sam-song (Three Saints: Hwan-In, the Heavenly King; Hwan-Ung, the Heavenly Prince; and Dan-Gun, the first human King)." [46])

Trinitarian Deity is well known in Christianity and in Buddhism

---

41) His *Asi Choson* (Korea in Early Years), Ch. 6, *Choson-kuwa Dan-Gun-ie Chulhyun* (Korea and the Coming of Dan-Gun).
42) See his *Dan-Gun Shinwhahe Shin-Yunghu* (Recent Studies in the Myth of Dan-Gun), p. 20.
43) *Ibid.,* p. 20.
44) *Chosen Fusock no Kenkyu* (Studies in Korean Shamanism), Vol. II, p. 320.
45) Kyung Cho Chung, *op. cit.,* p. 53.
46) His *Folk Tales From Korea,* p. 4.

in a later period. However, the Trinitarian God in traditional sha-
manism or *Shin-Kyo* is different. They represent three generations
of Heavenly King or *Hanunim*. We see the definite hierarchial system
within the Trinitarian forms of Heavenly Being. The Heavenly King
or Hwan-In represents the source of all spirituall beings. "Hwan"
indicates the world of *Hwan* or Heavenly Realm, [47]) and "In" sug-
gests the cause of it. Thus He represents the God of Heaven. His
prince, Hwan-Ung, represents the descendent of Heavenly Realm.
Thus He occupies the central realm between Heaven and Earth. Dan-
Gun or Sandalwood King represents the God of Earth. Thus He
became God of Mountain or *San-sin,* which occupies the center of
Cosmos reaching up to Heaven. We begin to notice why the stories
dealing with the origin of *Mutangs* are so closely attached to moun-
tains such as Mt. Chiri, Mt. South and Mt. Diamond. We remember a
myth of the Holy Mother who was understood to be the manifestation
of Mt. Chiri. The God of Mountain and the God of Earth became
important in a primitive society where hunting was the most essential
aspect of life. However, this Trinitarian idea of God, the God Heaven,
the God of Middle Realm and the God of Earth, has deteriorated in
the minds of *Mutangs.* The *Sam-sin* or Three Gods soon became the
San-sim, the God of Procreation or God of Childbearing, to later
shamanism. Chae Nam-sun points it out clearly when he says, "Even
though the idea of Three Gods had occupied an important place in our
traditional shamanism, it later lost its essence and came to be known
as a fertility god or the God of Productivity." [48]) We see clearly the
deterioration of traditional shamanism or *Shin-Kyo* in the later de-
velopment of shamanism in the cult of *Mutang.*

    Just as the Mt. Tĕbeg, where the Heavenly Prince descended, became
the "cosmic Mountain" to traditional shamanism, the sandalwood be-
came "the cosmic tree," which is, as Eliade says, "essential to the
shaman." [49]) The very name of Dan-Gun bears the name of a tree
known as sandalwood, because, according to the myth, He was born
under the tree. Moreover, the myth indicates that the bear who
became a beautiful woman went to the sandalwood and prayed many
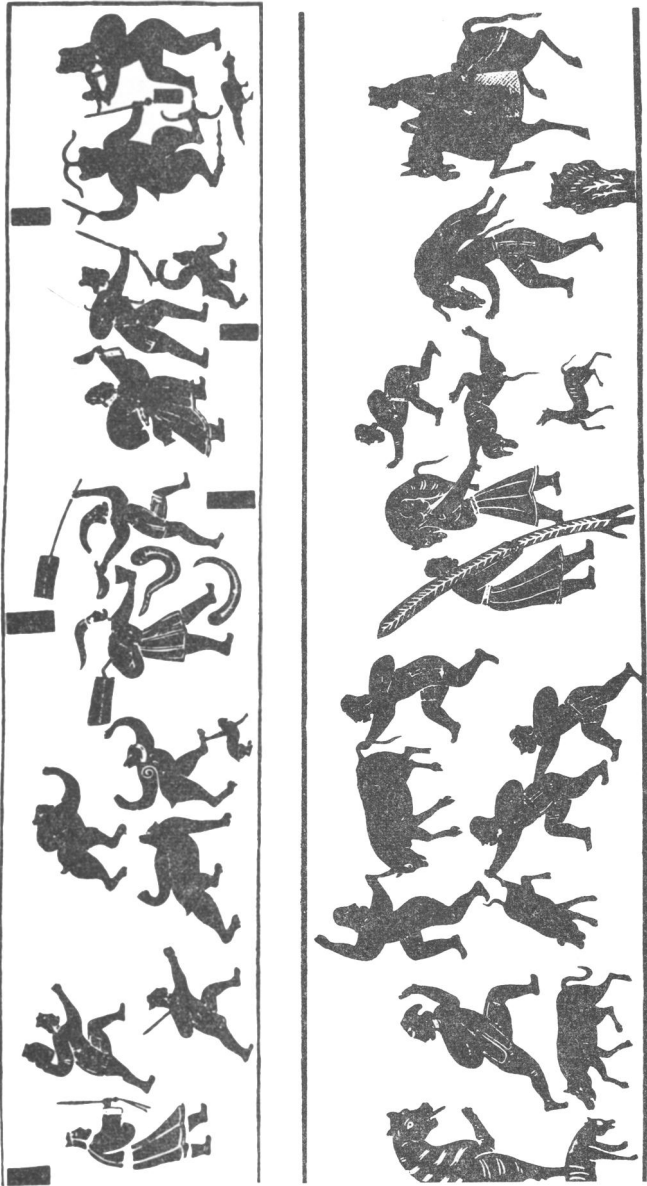
---

47) Chae Nam-sun, *Chuson Sangsik* (A General Knowledge of Korea), *Pung-
sock-Pyun* (On the Aspect of Customs) (Seoul, 1948), p. 44.
   48) *Ibid.,* p. 43.
   49) Eliade, *op. cit.,* p. 270.

Picture III

武氏祠堂 後石室第三石
（上第一層・下第二層）

times to have her wish of childbearing fulfilled. Since then certain
trees have been regarded as symbols of spiritual presence. In later
shamanism there appeared more tree gods than any other gods. The
symbol of cosmic tree found in the myth of Dan-Gun seems to confirm
its shamanistic origin. Perhaps it is possible to think of the sandal-
wood tree as the archetype of *"Schamanenbaum."* Moreover, we see
the appearance of animals, especially a bear and a tiger, in the myth
of Dan-Gun. Among many animals, bears and tigers were the most
fearsome ones commonly found in Far Eastern Asia. Hulbert is right.
They not only believed in the Heavens, but worshipped the tiger
spirit. [50]) However, the myth itself does not present the importance
of the tiger spirit. Perhaps the reverence of the tiger came in a later
stage of shamanistic development. The center of attention is given to
a bear who was transformed to a woman and elevated to Holy Mother.
The reverence of the bear spirit is commonly known in shamanistic
traditions in Siberia. Nioradze describes in his *Der Schamanismus bei
den sibirischen Völkern* that some shamans respect a bear as their
ancestor. [51]) Moreover, we find a similar account of the myth of
Dan-Gun in a myth of the Ainu people. The following account is
quoted from *The Ainu and Their Folk-lore:*

> In very ancient times there lived two people who were husband and wife.
> The husband one day fell ill, and soon after died, leaving no children, so
> that poor wife was left quite alone. Now it happened to have been decreed
> that the woman was at some future time to bear a son. When the people
> saw that the time for the child was right at hand, some said, "surely this
> woman has married again... But the woman herself said that it was all a
> miracle." And the following is an account of the matter: "One evening there
> was sudden appearance in which I was sitting. He who came to me had the
> external form of a man, and was dressed in black clothing. And turning in my
> direction he said — 'O, woman, I have one word to say to you, so please
> pay attention. I am the god possessed mountains (i.e., a bear), and not a
> human being at all, though I have now appeared to you in bodily form of a
> man. The reason of my coming is this. Your husband is dead, and you are
> left in a very lonesome condition. I have seen this and come to inform you
> that you will bear a child. He will be my gift to you. When he is born you
> will no longer be lonely, and when he is grown up, he will be great rich
> and eloquent.' After saying this he left me." By and by this woman bore
> a son, who in time really became a mighty hunter as well as a great, rich

---

50) H. Hulber, *The History of Korea* (Seoul: Methodist Publishing House,
1905), Vol. I, pp. 21, 23.
51) See Lee Hong-sick's translation into Korean, p. 52

and eloquent man. He also became the father of many children. Thus it happens
that many of Ainu who dwell among the mountains are to this day said
to be descended from a bear. They belong to the bear clan, and are called
Kimun Kimui sanikiri, i.e. "descendent of the bear." Such peoples are very
proud and say. "As for me, I am a child of the god of the mountains. I am
descended from the divine one which rules in the mountains." These peoples
are very proud indeed.[52])

This myth of Ainu has much in common with the myth of Dan-Gun.
Thus, it seems that the myth of Dan-Gun was influenced by Siberian
shamanism, even though we don't know how extensive it was. Further-
more, the myth of Dan-Gun is believed to be in affirmity with the
stone inscriptions in the Shrine of King Wu (the first ruler of Chou
Dynasty), which is located in the Shantong Province of Manchuria. [53])
As a result it seems unreasonable to believe that the myth of Dan-Gun
is unique. Its basic orientation seems to be shamanistic belief which has
been widely held in Siberia. Certainly, the shamanistic tendency is
the basic orientation of this myth. Thus it has been attributed to the
origin of traditional shamanism or *Shin-kyo* as well as the origin of
the nation.

The traditional shamanism of Korea or *Shin-kyo*, which is based on
the myth of Dan-Gun, is more than just shamanistic. It includes the
national faith in the highest form of Heavenly God who became the
direct lineage of Korean people through Dan-Gun. Perhaps the *Shin-kyo*
is quite similar to the so-called "Chinese Shamanism" or "*Wu*ism"
which is more than mere shamanism and cult of *Mutangs*. DeGroot
said that the *Wu* was not exactly the same as a shaman, but he was
the real priest of China before the pre-eminence of Confucianism. [54])
The *Shin-kyo*, like the *Wu*ism in China, precedes the influence of
Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. "According to the archeological
studies made by Choi Namsun, who scientifically explored mountains
such as Mt. Paiktu, Mr. Chiri and Mt. Mudeung, there were found

---

52) Quoted by Kim Jae-won in his *Dan-Gun Sinwhahe Sin-Yunku,* pp. 53-55.
53) Observe carefully the pictures in the Appendix: Picture one seems to
depict the general appearance of the Prince's descent with three thousand spirits
and three heavenly seals. Picture two deals with the detailed accounts of His
coming, and the third picture deals with the association with bears, tigers and
other animals. The comprehensive treatise is found in Kim Jae-won, *op. cit.,*
pp. 29-55.
54) J. J. M. DeGroot, *The Religious System of China,* Vol. I (Leiden, 1892),
pp. 1205ff.

the vestiges of ancient temples dedicated to the "God of Heaven"
together with other gods. It is believed that these temples were built
before the introduction of new religions such as Confucianism (first
century, B.C.) and Buddhism (fourth century, A.D.).[55] The native
religion of Korea was certainly the *Shin-kyo* or traditional shamanism
which had emphasis on the worship of the highest God of Heaven.
This traditional shamanism seemed to be radically deteriorated through
the influence of magic and the popular cult of Taoism which came
to Korea at the end of the Kokuryŏ Kingdom in the middle of the
seventh century, A.D.[56] The activity of traditional shamanism is
described as follows:

> The Han, or genuine Koreans of the third century after Christ, are described
> (in Chinese literature) as worshipping the spirits in the fifth and tenth
> months when the sowing and reaping of the year were concluded. On such
> occasions, they sang, danced, and drank wine. Several tens of them took
> part in the dance, and their hands and feet kept time carefully. One particular
> person was set apart to sacrifice to the Spirit of Heaven, and He was called
> the "Heavenly Ruler." [57]

As described above, the thanksgiving rituals in the fifth and tenth
months or in the spring and fall, which are still the cores of *Mutang*'s
ritual in our time, seemed to be primarily directed to the worship of
the Heavenly King in traditional shamanism. However, this genuine
Korean religion seemed to be deteriorated by the coming of Chinese
sorcerers and magicians, particularly by the popular cult of Taoism.
Thus Clark continues, "Magic and divination of the Koreans is said
to have followed the teachings of Wun Chang Kang, an ancient Chinese
sorcerer." [58] This deteriorated form of traditional shamanism (or
Shin-kyo) is known in our time as the cult of *Mutangs,* which has
been sustained by the inferior class of people, particularly the women
of the lower class. Therefore, this kind of distinction between the
pure and the deteriorated forms of shamanism is almost essential to
understanding the historical phenomena of Korean shamanism.

We may then conclude that the magical cult of *Mutang* which is in

---

55) Paul Y. U. Park, *op. cit.,* p. 15.
56) Kim Tuk-hwang, *op. cit.,* pp. 58ff.
57) C. A. Clark, *op. cit.,* pp. 176-77; quoted from Edkins' article in *Korean
Repository,* 1892, p. 200.
58) *Ibid.,* p. 77; quoted from *Royal Asiatic Society Records,* 1900, p. 18.

practice in our time is understood as the deteriorated form of traditional shamanism or *Shin-kyo*. The deterioration of *Mutang* comes from its preoccupation with magic and divination and neglecting the central importance of traditional shamanism, that is, to worship the *Hanunim* as the highest God of all others. [59]) Moreover, the Trinitarian form of Heavenly Gods became the god of procreation or childbearing. *Mutangs* have been more and more interested in lesser forms of spiritual being than the highest forms of Heavenly being, in order to meet the immediate desires of men. Perhaps, as we have pointed out, the creation of myths or legends dealing with the origin of *Mutang* cult might have something to do to bring its image closer to traditional shamanism. Whatever the motive behind these stories, the restoration of traditional shamanism requires the radical renovation of existing practices of *Mutangs* and *Pansoos*.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Books

AHLSTROM, Sydney E., Religious History of the American People — New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1972, 1158 p.

ANTHOLOGIE des Philosophes Iraniens, depuis le XVIIe siècle jusqu à nos jours, Tome Ier, Textes persans et arabes, choisis et présentés par Sayyed Jalâloddîn Ashtiyâni, Introduction analytique par Henry Corbin — Teheran, Departement d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien de Recherche, Paris, Librairie d'Antique et d'Orient, Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1972, 212 p. et 521 p.

GOLLOB, Hedwig, In Hoc Libello, 1) Religionswissenschaftlich-Historische, 2) Kunstwissenschaftlich-Historische, 3) Psychologisch-Erzieherische Probleme- Wien, in Eigen Verlag, 1971, 79 p.

GOMEZ, Manuel Guerra, Constantes Religiosas Europeas y Sotoscuevenses (Ojo Guareña, Cana de Castilla) — Burgos, Publiciones de la Facultad Teologica del Norte de España, Sede de Burgos, No 29, Ediciones Aldecoa, S.A., 1973, 679 p.

HEIN, Norvin, The Miracle Plays of Mathurā — New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1972, 313 p.

KERÉNYI, K. Zeus und Hera, Urbild des Vaters, des Gatten und der Frau — Leiden. E. J. Brill, 1972, 157 p.

PYE, Michael, Comparative Religion, An Introduction through Source Materials — Newton Abbot, 1972, 248 p.

---

59) Akamatzu believes that this lofty idea of believing in *Hanunim* is neglected in contemporary shamanism (cult of *Mutang*). However, Christianity in Korea attempts to make use of this belief to bring people into the Church. See his *Chusen Fuzuk no Kenkyu*, Vol. II, p. 320.

practice in our time is understood as the deteriorated form of traditional shamanism or *Shin-kyo*. The deterioration of *Mutang* comes from its preoccupation with magic and divination and neglecting the central importance of traditional shamanism, that is, to worship the *Hanunim* as the highest God of all others. [59]) Moreover, the Trinitarian form of Heavenly Gods became the god of procreation or childbearing. *Mutangs* have been more and more interested in lesser forms of spiritual being than the highest forms of Heavenly being, in order to meet the immediate desires of men. Perhaps, as we have pointed out, the creation of myths or legends dealing with the origin of *Mutang* cult might have something to do to bring its image closer to traditional shamanism. Whatever the motive behind these stories, the restoration of traditional shamanism requires the radical renovation of existing practices of *Mutangs* and *Pansoos*.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Books

AHLSTROM, Sydney E., Religious History of the American People — New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1972, 1158 p.

ANTHOLOGIE des Philosophes Iraniens, depuis le XVIIe siècle jusqu à nos jours, Tome Ier, Textes persans et arabes, choisis et présentés par Sayyed Jalâloddîn Ashtiyâni, Introduction analytique par Henry Corbin — Teheran, Departement d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien de Recherche, Paris, Librairie d'Antique et d'Orient, Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1972, 212 p. et 521 p.

GOLLOB, Hedwig, In Hoc Libello, 1) Religionswissenschaftlich-Historische, 2) Kunstwissenschaftlich-Historische, 3) Psychologisch-Erzieherische Probleme- Wien, in Eigen Verlag, 1971, 79 p.

GOMEZ, Manuel Guerra, Constantes Religiosas Europeas y Sotoscuevenses (Ojo Guareña, Cana de Castilla) — Burgos, Publiciones de la Facultad Teologica del Norte de España, Sede de Burgos, No 29, Ediciones Aldecoa, S.A., 1973, 679 p.

HEIN, Norvin, The Miracle Plays of Mathurā — New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1972, 313 p.

KERÉNYI, K. Zeus und Hera, Urbild des Vaters, des Gatten und der Frau — Leiden. E. J. Brill, 1972, 157 p.

PYE, Michael, Comparative Religion, An Introduction through Source Materials — Newton Abbot, 1972, 248 p.

59) Akamatzu believes that this lofty idea of believing in *Hanunim* is neglected in contemporary shamanism (cult of *Mutang*). However, Christianity in Korea attempts to make use of this belief to bring people into the Church. See his *Chusen Fuzuk no Kenkyu*, Vol. II, p. 320.

The MYTH of the State, based on Papers read at the Symposium on the Myth of
the State held at Åbo on the 6th-8th September 1971, edited by Haralds
Biezais, Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis VI — Stockholm, Almqvist &
Wiksell, 1972, 188 p.

SCHREINER, Lothar, Adat und Evangelium, Zur Bedeutung der altvölkischen
Lebensordnungen für Kirche und Mission unter den Batak in Nordsumatra —
Gütersloh, Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1972, 316 p.

STRAUSS, Leo, Xenophon's Socrates — London, Cornell University Press, 1972,
181 p.

VERNANT, Jean-Pierre, Vidal-Maquet, Pierre, Mythe et tragédie en Grèce
ancienne — Paris, Francois Maspéro, 1972, 184 p.

WESTERN RELIGION, A Country by Country Sociological Inquiry, edited by Hans
,Mol, in collaboration with Margareth Hethertion and Margareth Henty,
Religion and Reason 2, Method and Theory in the Study and Interpretation of
Religion — The Hague, Mouton, 1972, 642 p.

Periodicals

Archives de sociologie des religions, 34, Juillet-Décembre 1972.

Bulletin Signalitique, 1972, volume XXVI, tables annuelles, sciences religieuses,
sociologie-ethnologie.

Cuadernas de filología clásica, II, Facultad de filosofía y letras, universitas de
Madrid 1971.

Euhemer, Przegląd Religioznawczy, Polskie Towarzystwo Religioznawcze, 1972,
2/84, 3/85, 4/86.,

Folklore, Volume 83, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter 1972.

History of Religions, Volume 12, Number 3, February 1973.

Immanuel, A Bulletin of Religious Thought and Research in Israel, Number 1,
Summer 1972.

Indian Philosophy & Culture, Quaterly Research Journal of the University of
Oriental Philosophy, Vol. XVII, No. 3, Sept. 1972.

Kairos, Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Theologie, Neue Folge, XIV,
Jahrgang 1972, Heft 2, 3, 4.

Monumenta Nipponica, Studies in Japanese Culture, Volume XXVII, Spring,
Summer, Autumn, Winter 1972.

Revue théologique de Louvain, 4e Année 1973, Fasc. 1.

Theologie der Gegenwart, 15 Jg. 1972, Heft 2, 3.

Theologische Zeitschrift, herausgegeben von der Theologischen Fakultät der
Universität Basel, Jahrgang 28, Heft 5, Sept/Oct. 1972, Jahrgang 29, Heft 2,
März/April, 1973.

IN MEMORIAM OF PROF. TERUJI ISHIZU

The funeral of the Late Prof. Teruji Ishizu was held on July 8 1972 at the Buddhist Temple in Tokyo. It was a stormy day. In spite of heavy rain and wind, many of his friends and pupils were present at the ceremony.

He died suddenly of a cerebral haemorrhage. At the time, he was very busy making preparations for the 30th meeting of Japanese Association for Religious Studies, of which he was president. The meeting was held on October 20 that year. He was also the vice-chairman of IAHR.

He was born on March 25 1902 in Yamaguchi Prefecture. After graduating from Tokyo University, he stayed there in order to study the science of religions for ten years.

In 1938 he accepted the offer of a position as associate professor in the science of religions at Tohoku University. He came to Sendai with his family, and stayed there for about 27 years. During these years he was elected president of the Japanese Association for Religious Studies five times and vice-chairman of the IAHR three times. He was also elected president of Tohoku University.

He devoted his life to the study of religions and promoted the study of religions not only in Japan but also in other countries. The field of the late Prof. Ishizu was the philosophy of religions. He was one of the disciples of the late Prof. Masaharu Anesaki, who was the forerunner of the study of religions in Japan.

I would like to describe the central problem of Prof. Ishizu's philosophy of religions.

The ultimate aim of his philosophy of religions was to explain the ultimate structure of religious experiences. The philosophy of religions must be explained in terms of religious experiences. And so the study of religions had to start from religious experience in *sensus eminenti*. This experience is the interrelationship between two elements of the religious phaenomenon which are the act of the God and the religious act of a human being. He called this interwoven field *the third domain*. The essence of this ultimate religious experience is the transcendence of all human desires, and this domain may be called the irrational

because it goes beyond all rational understanding. To live a true religious life is beyond of all human desires, but this *beyondness* is not a matter of meditation or a life of escape from the world but living with all one's might in this irrational situation.

He first developed this theory in his book "on the Reality of the World in Tendai Buddhism", and it remained unchanged throughout his life. He always said that this theory was not a theology of Buddhism but was formed on the basis of Buddhist Philosophy. This marks his theory as of the Asiatic type. After he establishing his theory he wanted to compare it with European philosophies, especially the existential philosophies. He studied Heidegger and Kierkegaard, and he wrote "The Fundamental Structure of Religious Experiences" and "The Phaenomenon and Essence of the Philosophy of Religions", and "The Study on Kierkegaard", which will be published as his posthumous works.

After the Second World War he became interested in sociology, anthropology, psychology, etc., and he tried to test his theory in these fields also.

He encouraged the study of religions greatly but there remain many problems after his death. The meaning of his death expresses the real situation of the study of religions in Japan nowadays. Indeed, I think that his works were finished but really they were not finished yet.

Masahiro KUSUNOKI

GEO WIDENGREN ON SYNCRETISM:
ON PARSING UPPSALA METHODOLOGICAL
TENDENCIES*

BY

WALTER H. CAPPS
Santa Barbara, California, U.S.A.

> "I do not think that I ever ran the risk of being
> classified as a specialist in syncretism, but it has been
> of great interest to me to see how far my work could
> be said to be useful to the sudy of syncretism."
>
> Geo Widengren

Strictly speaking, I am not an historian of religion. Consequently,
my contribution to the subject, unlike most other contributions, will
not be based on textual studies, philological analysis, or even on recent
archaeological findings. My interests are different. Trusting the truth
of Thomas Kuhn's observations regarding the functions of paradigms
in scientific research [1]), and Pierre Thévenaz' contention that revo-
lutions in thought come more from methodological than from sub-
stantive innovations [2]), I am interested in certain approaches to religious
studies that have been fostered recently in Scandinavia, and particularly
at Uppsala and Lund. Aspiring to become something of an historian
of the history of religion, I am suggesting that much can be learned by
studying the traditions of scholarship by which the field has been
formed. In addition, being of Swedish descent on my mother's side,
my interest in Scandinavian religious self-consciousness, whether

---

1) Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago:
University of Chicago Press, 1970).

2) Pierre Thévenaz, *What is Phenomenology?*, trans. James M. Edie, Charles
Courtney, Paul Brockelman (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1962), p. 38.

tutored or not, is probably part of my own strategy for probing those questions of religious identity which continue to fascinate me. Thus, in turning my attention to Scandinavian traditions of scholarship, I move as one who hopes to identify some of his own religious and cultural roots; and, in doing this in connection with a symposium on the thought and work of Professor Geo Widengren, I am giving tacit recognition to the assumption that Professor Widengren is a self-conscious practitioner of certain deep-seated Scandinavian dispositional factors [3]. I suspect that these factors register as much in scholarly fields as they do in literature, the arts, certain branches of the social sciences, and even in religious enthusiasms.

The assumption I want to test has to do with the presence of paradigms in the formation of scholarly approaches to a subject and in the cultivation of intellectual positions. To put the matter less exactly, there is a certain style that becomes evident when one surveys the approaches employed in religious studies in Scandinavia—for our purposes, particularly in Sweden. This style is implicit both in methodological stances and in the tenor of historical investigations. I do not pretend to be able to identify its source, but I believe one can go some distance toward identifying a few of the ingredients in its morphology. That it exhibits coherence—that it is, in fact, a style—is indicated by its ability to operate effectively in several different but related fields. For example, I suspect that the way in which the Lundensian theologian and philosopher, Anders Nygren, employs motif-research is methodologically congruent with the way in which some historians of religion at Uppsala University have approached "divine-kingship ideology", and that both of these resonate very well with the dominant current manner of doing philosophy in the two institutions [4]. The interest

---

3) The precedent on which this presumption is based is Professor Widengren's continuing attempt to recapitulate the best in Uppsala scholarship in his own research. His writings also give evidence of deep interest in interpreting Scandinavian scholarship to others throughout the world. See, for example, his essay "Theological Studies and Research," in *Ergo International* (Uppsala: 1964), and the comprehensive essay „Die Religionswissenschaftliche Forschung in Skandinavien in den letzten zwanzig Jahren," in *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte.* Vol. V (1953), pp. 193-221 and 320-334.

4) Anders Nygren, *Religiöst Apriori* (Lund: Gleerupska, 1921); „Det Religionsfilosofiska Grundproblemet," in *Bibelforskaren.* Vol. XXVI (1919), pp. 290-313; *Filosofi och Motivforskning* (Stockholm: 1940); „Dogmatikens Vetenskapliga Grundlaggung," in *Lunds Universitets Årsskrift.* Vol. XVII, No. 8 (1921); and *Agape and Eros,* trans. Philip S. Watson (London: SPCK, 1957).

in descriptive accounts, in motifs, modes, and studies of themes, has become increasingly characteristic of twentiety-century Swedish approaches in religious studies. That is, whether one looks at philosophy of religion, history of religion, certain examples of systematic theology, or even at philosophical analyses, he can detect some common methodological features [5]). It is in this sense that I speak of a distinctive style of reflection.

But, before pursuing that topic directly, I find it necessary to supply some information about the genesis of the symposium in honor of Professor Widengren for which occasion these remarks were originally prepared. Such information will be useful, I believe, in helping to establish the framework within which symposium discussion occurred, as well as the "program strategy" which the planners inserted into its format. It is also germane to my subject.

---

5) In addition to some of the references already cited, the following essays provide helpful background material on developments within the academic fields cited in Scandinavian centers of learning: Robert T. Sandin, "The Founding of the Uppsala School," in *Journal of the History of Ideas*. Vol. XXIII, No. 4 (1962), pp. 496-512; Erik Ryding, *Den svenska filosofins historia* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1959); „Scandinavian Philosophy" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), Vol. VII, p. 294-302, prepared by Justus Hartnack; and Widengren's two-part article, „Die Religionswissenschaftliche Forschung in Skandinavien in den letzten zwanzig Jahren," already cited.

Significantly, the standard Scandinavian textbooks on the history of philosophy look very much like standard European textbooks on the history of philosophy: an inordinate amount of attention is not given to developments within Scandinavion schools. Anders Wedberg's *Filosofins Historia* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1966) incorporates Scandinavian tendencies in the evaluation of schools and trends which originate elsewhere, although it also gives large place to positivistic and analytical philosophical trends including Scandinavian investments in these traditions.

Certain background factors can also be detected in Thor Hall, *A Framework for Faith. Lundensian Theological Methodology in the Thought of Ragnar Bring* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), especially pp. 13-33, although Hall concentrates on developments in theology and philosophy of religion. Nygren himself goes into these matters in some detail in his new book, *Meaning and Method. Prolegomena to a Scientific Philosophy of Religion and a Scientific Theology,* trans. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972).

Nygren's successor at Lund, Gustaf Wingren, has prepared two useful survey-discussions of the recent development of theological trends in Sweden: "The Main Lines of Development in Systematic Theology and Biblical Interpretation in Scandinavia," published by the Library, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, 1964, and "Swedish Theology Since 1900," in *Scottish Journal of Theology*. Vol. IX, No. 2 (1956), pp. 113-134.

In terms of the intentions of its sponsor, the Institute of Religious
Studies of the University of California, Santa Barbara, the symposium
was the third in a series of conferences on eminent living scholars
who have made a distinctive contribution to the arts, sciences, and
humanities and have been particularly influential in giving shape
and direction to the scholarly study of religion. From its beginnings
in 1967, the Institute has shown particular interest in "breakthrough
models" of interdisciplinary research in religion. Thus, a symposium
series on the work of persons who have broken new methodological
ground became a natural product of an ongoing attempt to trace the
genesis of "breakthrough" in man's expanding comprehension of the
role assigned to religious factors in the composition of selected cul-
tures. Informally, the Institute has been referring to these symposia
by the rubric "catalytic figures". With such phraseology it means to
emphasize that the persons whose work is being studied, discussed,
and assessed have made a contribution to the field of religious com-
prehension that far transcends the mere accumulation of new or other-
wise extensive information. In every case, the "catalytic figure" in
question generated a lively interest within the field by prompting a
new pattern of arrangement. Georges Dumézil's tripartite approach
to Indo-European mythology is a significant example of this, and
gave the series its inaugural meeting [6]). Erik Erikson's work with
the human life cycle, his concentration on relationships between the
ego and society, and the implication of the advent of psycho-history
for the study of religion, provided another eminent instance which
the Institute was privileged to treat [7]). The same combination of
achievements was implicit in the work of Geo Widengren, whose
studies in a wide variety of subjects are recognized as being land-
marks within several branches of the history of religions.

And yet, the designers of the symposium encountered organizational

---

6) The proceedings from this symposium are forthcoming in a book entitled
Myth in Indo-European Antiquity (The Proceedings of the Dumézil Symposium),
edited by Gerald J. Larson, to be published by University of California Press,
1973.

7) The proceedings of this symposium are being prepared for publication by
Professors Donald Capps of the University of Chicago, M. Gerald Bradford
of Brigham Young University, and Walter H. Capps of the University of
California, Santa Barbara. The editors expect that the book will be published by
University of California Press under the title *Historical Interpretation and
Religious Biography.*

difficulties because of Professor Widengren's persistent lifetime campaign against simplistic, reductionistic identification with methodological labels and scholastic slogans. He has taken pains to point out, for example, that he really is not an unqualified "divine kingship" advocate, whatever that turns out ot be. Similarly he is something more than an "anti-evolutionist" in the comprehension and interpretation of man's religious history. Moreover, his work cannot be reduced to a scholar's personal compulsion to trace down every example of "belief in high gods", the scope of that inquiry being restricted to the ancient near eastern world. Thus, he is not this easy to type. His contribution to the morphology of the field cannot be accounted for quickly, because the significance of his studies is not automatically classifiable. Aa I have described his career in another place:

> Trained under Professor Tor Andrae (whom he has succeeded at Uppsala) in the history of religion, and thoroughly trained in philological skills, Widengren has conducted extensve ad painstaking research in a wide range of areas. His dissertation in 1936 dealt with Babylonian and Israelite religions as self-contained entities. He has also done significant work in Iranian religions, Islam, the Old Testament, and Gnostic studies. Widengren has championed sacral kingship theory, influencing Ivan Engnell, the author of *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East.* Because of the times in which he has lived, Widengren has also inherited an interest in he evolution of religion, and, more particularly, the theory of the "high God" as advocated by Wilhelm Schmidt. Against Schmidt he rejects the notion of a primitive monotheism, but with Pettazzoni (whose theories he has embellished) Widengren attributes particular power to the sky-god. As an heir to the evolutionist traditions from the days of Frazer, Widengren is also a very severe critic. ... From another side, he also registers as a phenomenologist of religion (witness his book *Religionsphänomenologie*). However, if he were asked to typify his approach, Widengren might reply that he identifies most readily with those who approach religion through sound and thorough philological studies of primary textual materials, regardless of the area or the subject under scrutiny [8]).

And yet, this description tends to beg the question. Geo Widengren has been something far more than a diligent, painstaking, persistent, and meticulous worker on "inside problems" within the field of the history of religions. He has also been a very conscious designer and articulator of the field's contours and configurations. What he has achieved is not exhausted by the impressive array of materials he has

---

8) Walter H. Capps, *Ways of Understanding Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), p. 119.

amassed, classified, cross-referenced, and interpreted. These achieve-
ments, by themselves, are more than sufficient to justify the almost
incomparable reputation Widengren now enjoys among historians of
religions. But he has done far more. And that something more, we
recognize, has much to do with his catalytic influence upon the shape
of the field of study.

But the planners of the symposium didn't have the mechanism to
coerce access to Widengren's larger contribution. To be sure, they
had hints and suggestions about potential symposium programs through
which the distinguishing *sine qua non* might emerge, all of the time
recognizing that the emergence of a *sine qua non* cannot be pro-
grammed. They recognized too that symposia are never very pre-
dictable, especially when the planners aren't clear about what they
want to make obvious. Thus, the distinguishing principle in Widen-
gren's thought was not identified, named, or articulated prior to the
symposium despite the assurances the planners extended to each other
that Widengren would be honored for his formative work. As it turned
out, we were correct is not pressing the question further. But before
realizing this, our dilemma led us to wonder if a formative principle
had ever been grasped by those who have written about Geo Widen-
gren. His work had been widely reviewed and appreciated, but always
in pieces, and usually on the basis of this or that contention about
a very specific subject. Consequently, its controlling principles have
been able to resist articulation. Previous assessments always left
remainders: there were large ranges of discourse that were left
untended. Given these precedents we recognized that we could probably
not expect success in hoping to do more than treat Widengren's
contribution to the various areas of scholarship with which he has
concerned himself—Islamic and Iranian religions, Gnosticism, Old
Testament studies, and the like. But we wanted to point the discussion
toward an assessment of overal methodological and interpretive prin-
ciples. So, acting boldly and with these large hopes, we proposed that
the symposium concern itself with the problem of religious syncretism.
And we requested that Professor Widengren's own contribution to the
symposium be self-consiously autobiographical.

In terms of symposium strategy, such devices provided focus as well
as intrigue. In addition, the topic was an aid in urging the symposium
participants to talk to each other no matter how varied their individual

specialties and competences. As noted, Widengren's contributions to scholarship extend over such a wide range of important subjects that successor-specialists are prompted to concentrate on smaller portions of it without ever feeling qualified or constrained to tackle the whole lot. At most times and in most instances, particular concentrations enhance both scholarship and insight; but, in terms of the mechanics of symposia, they cannot be counted upon to prompt overall evaluation. Thus, in choosing "religious syncretism" as the symposium's theme, we wanted to make sure that the symposium would be a symposium. We assumed that "religious syncretism" could not be addressed unless attention was paid to ways in which religious phenomena—not to mention special topics—are interlaced with each other. Neither can the theme be approached unless consideration is given to the inter- action and overlappings that characterize traditions and cultures. But our compelling interest was in comprehensive review and assessment: it was thought that "religious syncretism" might help the symposium identify some of the controlling, typifying features of a distinguished scholar's life-long work.

Whether the device worked or not must be left for the thirty symposium participants to decide. From some vantage points, there is no question but that the symposium was successful. The contribu- tions were of high quality. Professor Widengren's paper was, can we say, monumental. And the discussion was lively throughout. Further- more, the participants were persons of solid accomplishment in their respective fields and, of manifestly high interest in Widengren's work. Given these ingredients, there was no way in which the conference could have failed. And yet—as I would be the first to admit—the program strategy brought ambiguous results. Instead of disclosing an identi- fiable comprehensive principle, "religious syncretism" only seemed able to certify an impasse, a divergence of prolegomenous opinion that seemed to grow wider as discussion progressed. There were provo- cative insights on syncretism. There were provocative statements on Widengren. There were provocative statements by Widengren on syncretism. And there were provocative insights by Widengren on Widengren. And yet it seemed that the two topics could be talked about separately. In fact, it seemed to some observers that Widengren couldn't satisfy some of the participants on the subject of "religious syn- cretism" without violating his own orientation. Others, sensing this,

considered it manifestly ignoble that Widengren should be asked to make the attempt. As a result, several persons left the symposium dissatisfied with its results because it didn't seem to produce any obvious marks of culmination.

Partially sharing that attitude, somewhat disturbed by it, and suspecting that it was premature, I reread some of the symposium papers and listened to the tape recordings of the discussion. Then I realized that the topic was more successful than we had projected, in ways we had not expected, because of Professor Widengren's suspicions in approaching it. "Religious syncretism" is a theme which Widengren's outlook has some difficulty reaching, but the difficulty is self-conscious. He can get to the topic, although only after doing the necessary preliminary work on the semantics and logic of it. But when he does this, he does so with a certain apology, almost as though he had accepted an assignment which is not altogether of his own choosing [9]). But this, I would argue, tells us something significant about Widengren's approach, and perhaps more than we would care to know about were he simply advocating or opposing the concept. But to appreciate this, we must know something more about the intellectual background within which Geo Widengren works, for then it becomes possible to detect some of the formative morphological ingredients of that which we have been referring to as the "Uppsala style."

That style was implicit even as early as 1893 when Swedish scholars were invited to attend the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. They found it impossible to attend the Conference because of its "distinctly syncretistic" bias, and, instead, arranged for their own international conference—the *Religionsvetenskapliga Kongressen*—in

---

9) We do not want to give the impression, however, that Widengren resists treatment of "syncretism." As his paper in this volume indicates, he has spoken and written on the topic several times before, recently, throughout his life. See, for example, the following studies: *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism. Studies in Manichean, Mandean, and Syrian-Gnostic Religion* (King and Saviour II). (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift, 3, 1946); *Mani und der Manichäismus* (Stuttgart, Urban Büher, 57, 1961); „Synkrretische Religionen," in *Handbuch der Orientalistik,* edited by B. Spuler. Vol. VIII, No. 2 (Leiden, 1961), pp. 43-82; and „‚Synkretismus‘ in der Syrischen Christenheit?" in *Proceedings of the Symposium „Synkretismus im syrisch-persischen Kulturraum,"* *October 1971,* forthcoming under the auspices of the Goettingen Academy. These articles, together with a long list of others, simply reinforce the fact that Professor Widengren works thematically rather than syncretistically.

Stockholm in 1897 [10]). The stress during the Stockholm conference
was on *Religionswissenschaft,* a topic selected to give emphasis to the
scientific character of the discipline as it was practiced in Scandinavia
as distinct from the preoccupations of the Chicago conference [11]).
Looked at from one vantage point, the intent of the conference was
to purge the history of religion from all "Chicago elements". From
the time that Nathan Söderblom became Professor in Theological
Encyclopedia and Prenotions, and even before, there was distrust of
"religious syncretism" in Uppsala, especially when this implied any
sort of meta-historical, "spiritualistic" modulation of historical tradi-
tions. The distrust was inspired in part by orthodox Christian theo-
logical encounters with Swedenborgianism in Scandinavia [12]). It was
fostered too by an interest in strictly textual and historical studies.
And finally, it was reinforced by the dominant climate of thought in
Sweden, a climate to which Uppsala had made a significantly large
contribution.

With Vienna and Cambridge, Uppsala owns the distinction of being
the locale in which positivistic philosophy originated. Working in-
dependently of likeminded thinkers in Austria and Great Britain,
the philosophers of the "new Uppsala school" came to similar con-
clusions about the epistemological inaccessibility of so-called meta-
physical realities. For the bulk of the nineteenth century, because of
the prominence and influence of Christopher Jacob Boström, (1797-
1866), the dominant philosophical tendency in Sweden was idealism,
not out-and-out Hegelianism, but an idealism that had been influenced
by both Hegel and Schelling. Boström's philosophy, frequently des-
cribed as a kind of Plotinian neo-Platonism, was metaphysically
oriented, and tended to conceive reality in spiritual terms [13]). Reality

---

10) This fact is documented in Bengt Sundkler's biography of the late Arch-
bishop Nathan Söderblom, *Nathan Söderblom. His Life and Work* (London:
Lutterworth Press, 1968), pp. 50 ff.

11) The proceedings of the Stockholm conference were edited by S. A. Fries
for the volume *Religionsvetenskapliga Kongressen i Stockholm 1897.*

12) Many persons were worried about "spiritualism," not only churchmen,
theologians, and historians of religion. See, for example, Axel Hägerström's
"Lectures on So-Called Spiritual Religion", translated by C. D. Broad, in *Theoria.*
XIV (1948), pp. 28-67.

13) Readers resricted to English sources can become familiar with Boström's
thought best by reading the translation of *Skrifter av Christopher Jacob Boström,*
H. Edfette and G. J. Keijser, eds., 3 vols. (Uppsala: 1883-1906), which is entitled

itself was spiritual, for Boström; determinations of reality occur in consciousness primarily; and the entities of the world are ideas. Consistent with idealist contentions, Boström argued that everything that is is a determinative mode of self-consciousness. Being then is a system of ideas. And, as Justus Hartnack has summarized, "Boströmianism was for Swedish intellectual life almost what Hegelianism was for the intellectual life of Europe [14]). It dominated Swedish metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of law, and philosophy of religion, and until the beginning of the twentieth century it had no rival" [14]).

Its rival was shaped by the philosophical inquiries of Axel Hägerström (1868-1939) [15]) and/or Adolf Phalén (1884-1931) [16]); the

---

Philosophy of Religion, trans. Victor E. Beck and Robert N. Beck (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963). An able description of Boströmianism is included in Erik Ryding, *Den svenska filosofins historia* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1959). Axel Lundeberg summarizes Boström's philosophy in his *Sweden's Contribution to Philosophy* (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing, 1927), pp. 410-423. Consult Beck's "Selected Bibliography" for additional works.

14) Hartnack, *op. cit.,* p. 295.

15) Hägerström's philosophy is becoming more widely known among American and English philosophers because of recent translation. For example, see his *Philosophy and Religion,* trans. Robert T. Sandin (New York: Humanities Press, 1964); his *Inquiries into the Nature of Law and Morals,* trans. C. D. Broad (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1953); and his "Lectures on So-Called Spiritual Religion," *op. cit.,* trans. C. D. Broad. Furthermore, there is an English summary appended to Jarl Hemberg's comparison of Hägerströms and Nygren's philosophies of religion, entiled *Religion och Metafysik* (Stockholm: Diakonistyrelsens Bokforlag, 1966). Then, in addition, Ernst Cassirer, a philosopher generally well known in American and English philosophical circles, has written a perceptive account of Hägerström's position entitled, *Axel Hägerström. Eine Studie zur Schwedischen Philosophie der Gegenwart* (Göteborg: Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift, 1939). Other good secondary materials include two in Swedish: Gotthard Nygren's *Religion och Sanning. Studier i Axel Hägerströms Religionsfilosofi med Särskild Hänsyn till Hans Kritik av Dogmatiken* (Abo: Acta Academiae Aboensis, 1968); and Konrad Marc-Wogau's *Studier till Axel Hägerströms Filosofi* (Uppsala: Föreningen Verdandi, 1968). Hägerström's Philosophy of Religion, entitled *Reiligionsfilosofi,* was edited by Martin Fries (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1949). A volume published only recently may have some significance for our study, i.e. Hägerström's *Jesus. En Karaktaranalys* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1968).

Hägerström's chief works are *Filosofi och Vetenskap,* ed. Martin Fries (Stockholm: Ehlns, 1957); *Kants Ethik im Verhaltnis zu seinem erkenntnistheoretischen Grundgedanken* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1908); *De Socialistika Ideernas Historia,* ed. Martin Fries (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1946); *Socialteleologi i Marxismen* (Uppsala: Akademiska Boktryckeriet, E. Berling, 1909); and *Stat och Rätt* (Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1904).

16) A sample of Adolf Phalén's writings would include the following: *Beitrag*

controversy continues as to which of the two men arrived at the point
of critical insight first. The initial challenge was on epistemological
rather than metaphysical grounds. Then, when the epistemological
challenge proved potent, the metaphysical contentions of Boströmian
idealism also began steadily to give way. There were intermediate
figures, of course. Pontus Wikner (1837-1888) [17], who gave himself
to uncovering contradictions in subjectivist epistemology, and Vitalis
Norström (1856-1916) [18], who criticized Boströmian metaphysics
on grounds that thoroughgoing separations of spirit and matter forced
some necessary ideas into becoming mere representations rather than
realities, as Boström would have wanted it, provided the earliest chal-
lenges. But these were like the first arrows that penetrate a line of
stable defense. They are as important for the onslaught they signal as
for the particular damage they wreak. The crucial challenge was spirited
by Hägerström and Phalén, and both on the basis of epistemological
contentions. Steeped in Kantian thought, Hägerström wrestled with the
problem of how knowledge of a distinct object is possible. The problem
is one that concerned both Wikner and Norström in that each found
difficulty with Boström's contention that knowledge is self-conscious-
ness, or, in the familiar formulation, that to be is to be perceived.
Phalén attacked the same contention by showing that idealism's con-
ceptual underpinnings lead frequently to self-contradictions. Simil-

---

zur Klärung des Begriffs der inneren Erfahrung (Uppsala, 1913); *Das Erkennt-
nisproblem in Hegels Philosophie. Die Erkenntniskritik als Metaphysik* (Uppsala:
1912); *Die Philosophie der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellung* (Leipzig: 1924);
„Kritik av subjectivismen i ilika former," in *Festskrift tillägnad E. O. Burman*
(Uppsala: 1910)« "Our common notions and their dialectic movements in the
history of philosophy," in *Proceedings of the 7th International Congress of
Philosophy* (Oxford: 1931), *Två Provforelasningar* (Uppsala: 1916); *Über die
Relativitat der Raum- und Zeitbestimmungen* (Uppsala: Leipzig, 1922); and
Zur Bestimmung des Begriffs des Psychischen (Uppsala: Humanistika Veten-
skapssamfundet, 1890). The latter two volumes bespeak interests familiar to
those who have worked with the thought of Edmund Husserl.

   17) Carl Pontus Wikner's works have been assembled under the title *Skrifter
av Pontus Wikner*, 12 Vols., edited by Adolf Ahlberg and Theodor Hjelmqvist
(Stockholm: A. Bonnier, 1922-1927).

   18) Prominent works by Norström include *Grunddragen af Herbert Spencers
Sedelära* (Uppsala: E. Berling, 1889); *Religion und Gedanke,* translated into
German by Ernst Alfred Meyer and Axel Lagerwall (with an Introduction
by Elof Åkesson), (Lund: Borelum, 1932); and *Hvad innebär en Modern Stand-
punkt i Filosofien?* (Göteborg: Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift, Bd. 4, 1895).

arly, in his quest for accessibility to objects distinct from mind,
Hägerström gave some credence to the kinds of mental distinctions
that Kant focussed upon when talking about the categories and about
forms of intuition. But eventually even these sorts of distinctions
couldn't give Hägerström the flexibility he needed in distinguishing
objects of knowledge from subjective determinations. The final break
with Boströmian subjectivist epistemology came for Hägerström, as
for Phalen, through the recognition that reality, which is not reducible
to consciousness, is given in cognition.

It was an epistemological innovation that bore extensive implications
for metaphysics. Hägerström rejected completely the notion of an un-
differentiable, unspecifiable, indeterminate metaphysical *ding an sich*.
With this rejection, the idealst conception of an absolute—or, more pre-
cisely, the idealist understanding of absolute Being—is also foreclosed.
And implicit in that foreclosure is the disavowal of all religious and
theological positions which depend upon conventional metaphysical sup-
ports. Hägerström concludes that every declaration that flows from
„*Geisteswissenschaft*—whether it concerns the self, society, the state,
morality, or religion—is only an intellectual play with expressions of
feeling, as if something real were designated thereby." Thus, in hoping
to destroy metaphysics, Hägerström worked too to demolish the Boströ-
mian idealist subjectivism which had all but been synonymous with
Swedish philosophy for almost an entire century. Boströmianism was
gone forever, and with it the religious and theological conveniences
implicit in subjective idealism.

I must emphasize that I am not contending that to Geo Widengren's
religionswissenschaftliche programmatic was prompted or inspired by
the positivistic philosophical critique of metaphysical idealism. Rather,
I am calling attention to the fact that Hägerström's and Phalén's
contentions were in the air, so to speak, and could not be prevented
from influencing developments within a large number of academic
fields, not least the history of religions. Remember that we are talking
about the development of traditions of scholarship. This doesn't make
Geo Widengren a Hägerströmian, a Phalenian, or even an anti-
Boströmian thinker necessarily. On the contrary, were we attempting
a strict genetic account of the development of his thought we would
pay close attention to the influence of his teachers in *Religionsgeschichte*

and Semitic languages, Tor Andrae [19]) and H. S. Nyberg [20]), to name but two of the more obvious examples. And the genetic account would also refer to certain students with whom Widengren has worked in concert. Certainly Widengren did not calculate his methodology to invoke the sanction of the philosophical analyst; nor is there evidence that he paid very much attention to them [21]). At the same time, *the morphology of that intent in the history of religions is in fundamental agreement with the new direction given philosophy through the "new Uppsala" influence*. I am proposing that the way in which Uppsala-conceived history of religion (and, more specifically, the methodology of Geo Widengren) is construed is consistent with commitments which contemporary Scandinavian philosophers exercise under positivistic influence. The philosophers might sometimes contend with the historians of religion on fundamental philosophical questions regarding the validity of religious experience, but they can hardly fault them

---

19) Tor Andrae is noted for such works as *Mohammed. The Man and His Faith,* trans. Theophil Menzel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), and also published as a Harper Torchbook; *Die Frage der Religiösen Anlage* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift, 1932); *Världsreligionerna* (Stockholm: 1944); *Kristendomen den fullkomliga religionen?* (Stockholm: Religionsvetenskapsliga Skrfter 6, 1922); and *Det Osynligas Värld* (Uppsala, 1933). In „Die Religionswissenschaftliche Forschung in Skandinavien in den letzten zwanzig Jahren", *op. cit.,* Widengren credits Andrae with great contributions to Islamic studies, valuable explorations in the psychology of religion, a significant and decisive break with "evolutionism" as a methodological category in the history of religions—cf. Widengren's "Evolutionism and the Problem of the Origin of Reliigon," in *Ethnos.* Vol. X, Nos. 2-3, 1945, reprinted in part in Walter H. Capps, ed., *Ways of Understandng Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 119-126—and for overcoming the tension between religion-as-theology and religion-as-a-humanistic-discipline in favor of the science of *Religionswissenschaft*.

See Widengren's book *Tor Andrae* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1947), and his commemorative pieces, „Gnostikern Stagnelius (Till Tor Andrae på 60-Arsdagen)," in *Samlaren.* Vol. XXV (1944), pp. 115-178, and „Tor Andrae. In Memoriam," *Vår Lösen.* Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 (1947), pp. 87-93.

20) Hendrik Samuel Nyberg wrote *Irans Forntida Religioner* (Uppsala: Olaus-Petri-Föreläsningar, 1937) which was also published in German translation, *Die Religionen des alten Iran,* trans. H. H. Schaeder (Leipzig, 1938).

21) In private conversation, Professor Widengren informed me that the philosopher at the University of Stockholm under whose training he was influenced most was Dr. Hellström who might have been appointed successor to Phalén had he not died just prior to the appointment. In his philosophical studies, Widengren was particularly interested in logic and the history of ideas.

on the way in which they approach their craft and the methodological
claims which they bring to it. For example, the disciplines that belong
to Religious Studies in Uppsala are conspicuously devoid of onto-
logical commitment, and refrain from providing commentary on topics
like "the nature of religion" or "man's religious experience generally
conceived." In fact, one of the chief marks which differentiates
Swedish approaches to Religious Studies is the strict economy of its
interpretations and claims. The Occamist contention that "what can
be explained on fewer principles is explained needlessly by more" [22])
is honored throughout by the Uppsala historians of religion. The
sophistication of their approach is expressed more in the multiplicity
of linguistic and philological tools which they control than in the
preponderance of conclusions they tend to propose. Very self-cons-
ciously, they avoid postulating unverifiable entities to account for
what can be explained more simply and directly. And this, too, is a
characteristic Hägerströmian, nominalistic, even positivistic ploy. To
recognize its expression in the writings of specific Swedish historians
of religion is not to argue that all of them are nominalistic, positivistic
or anything worse. Rather it is simply to note that this is a history of
religions conceived along similar structural lines, with similar stresses
and omissions, because there are parallel methodological commitments.
And, to bring our discussion to the point at which it began, one can
expect this climate of thought to become more and more explicit when
a spokesman for the Uppsala approach is asked to apply his skills to
an analysis of "religious syncretism".

It is evident that the kind of intellectual background we have been
sketching will not prompt those committed to it to give full attention
to syncretistic features, regardless of the subject field in which they
are working. This is not the theoretical milieu that prompts or promotes
the unification or synthesizing of data. Neither does it regard the
disclosure of coherence as the highest possible objective. This is not
the methological translation of neo-Platonic ploys in which the premium

---

22) William of Ockham, *pluralites non est ponenda sine necessitate* ("multi-
plicity ought not to be posited without necessity") and *frustra fit per plura quod
potest fieri per pauciora* ("what can be explained by he assumption of fewer
things is vainly explained by the assumption of more things"), and *entia non
sunt multiplicanda sine necessitate* ("entities must not be multiplied without ne-
cessity").

is placed upon a recognition of priorities in the hierarchy of knowledge, and priority is usually given to the *One* that is entailed by the *many*. Instead of being syncretistic, the Uppsala methodology gives sanction to atomistic endeavors. It tends to treat each thing in its place, in its concreteness, in its particularity and specificity, and then when it ventures out onto synthetic grounds it does so grudgingly and with extreme caution, almost as though such ventures are doomed in advance to unwarranted excesses. By virtue of its reaction against subjective idealism, and because of its devotion to techniques of empirical research, the Uppsala appoach will never be caught with epistemological and metaphysical over-commitments. The haunting fear of that scares all practitioners of the method into secondmindfulness when religious syncretism is being considered.

All of the remarks made so far can be registered without a prejudgment as to whether the Uppsala practitioners should be regarded as heroes or villains. It is enough for awhile to list some of the things Uppsala philosophy doesn't intend to do and some of the issues it wants to elide or transcend. Then it is sufficient to point out that the same disposition cannot be expected to warm to a topic like "syncretism" without suspecting first that this is a topic that probably ought to be submitted to conceptual, analytical catharsis. There is widespread recognition that "syncretism" tends to invite mistaken metaphysical treatments and precisely because of its inferential capacities. When left unexamined, "syncretism" allows many allusions to lurk unchallenged. Next, it must be said that the Uppsala practitioners offer this judgment on behalf of clarity in thought, adding that it is virtuous to work for clarity. Finally, still without prejudging the virtues of the case, it must be observed that Geo Widengren's methodological propensities are in fundamental keeping with the dominant tendencies of the controlling philosophical orientation. For example, he sees no need to pay homage to the idealist framework of the nineteenth century upon which framework a number of prominent approaches to the field continue to remain dependent. His attitude doesn't invoke the conventional metaphysical supports. Thus it cannot be assaulted philosophically for the typical kinds of methodological excesses. Neither will it fall victim to the kinds of charges E. E. Evans-Pritchard makes when he contends that the long quest for the origin of religion, for example, is based upon the perpetuation of

a massive logical error. Or, to put the suggestion more dramatically: many of the presuppositions on which the quest for religious syncretism is based turn out to be conceptually and semantically indefensible when pressed into the positivist's screen. Of course, there is recourse to leaving such presuppositions in their original framework. But such an alternative is not open to the scholar who distrusts that framework. Furthermore, it puts the proponents of that alternative in the awkward position of having to argue on behalf of syncretism. From the positivist side, it will always be inappropriate to lend advocacy to syncretism. When advocacy occurs, it simply indicates that appeal is being made to other sorts of interests and appetites. Such appeals have no force unless meta-historical, extra-territorial ranges are invoked and tapped. And this runs directly counter to the methodological principles from which the Uppsala approach has gained distinction. In Uppsala terms, it is appropriate to detect instances and examples of religious syncretism, but having these, it becomes superfluous to make a case for them.

Looked at in these terms, Widengren's attitude is to approach a phenomenon with an interest in its specific manner of determinateness. He is not interested initially in the coherence that can be applied to everything within his perspective, nor does he want to demonstrate that there are repetitions of the same phenomenon in several different historical and cultural locations. Neither is he vexed by the problematic Robert Bellah has described recently when he writes about religions [23]).

---

23) Cf. Robert Bellah, "Religion in the University: Changing Consciousness, Changing Structures," in Claude Welch, *Religion in the Undergraduate Curriculum. An Analysis and Interpretation* (Washington, D. C.: Association of American Colleges, 1972), pp. 13-18, esp. p. 14, and Bellah, "Christianity and Symbolic Realism," in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion.* Vol. IX, no. 2 (Summer, 1970), pp. 89-115 (includes comments by Samuel Z. Klausner and Benjamin Nelson). Bellah includes syncretism in his typology of religious pluralism. Then, with reference to those who take religious symbolism seriously and can therefore attribute validity to more than one religion, Bellah writes, "This means neither syncretism nor relativism... But the entire range of man's spiritual experiences, for such people, is personally, existentially, available" (in *Religion in the Undergraduate Curriculum, op. cit.,* p. 14). Bellah has hold of the problematic, it seems, to which much current discussion of syncretism refers.

Scandinavian opinions on the subject are reflected in S. S. Hartman, *Syncretism,* papers read at the symposium on Cultural Contact, Meeting of Religions, and Syncretism, held at Åbo, Finland, September 8-10, 1966 (Stockholm: Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis, 1969), No. 3.

That is, Widengren does not appear to be worried about how it can be that several religions can claim exclusive rights to religious truth simultaneously. Thus, he is not contending for an interpretation of the religions that ascribes validity to each one because all (or most) of them can be made to fit a more comprehensive, overarching meaning scheme. Instead, his compelling interest is in penetrating to the precise manner of determinateness of very specific objects of historical, textual, and philological inquiry. Thus, he proceeds by fixing his attention upon the particular phenomenon under scrutiny; he places it within its proper context of meaning; then he probes, explores, describes, cross-references, and explains each item as fully, specifically, and minutely as the data allows. Then, should it appear that a particular context of meaning gives indication of having been influenced by another context—or, should it seem that something within the context may have originated in another locale—Widengren can go on to talk very appropriately about borrowings, interaction, contact, influence, continuity, and even religious syncretism. But then these are categories that both emerge from and can be treated within specific contexts of meaning[24]. They have definite location and need not be treated in the abstract. Furthermore, if appeal must be made to something outside the context, it is because something inside stretches that far. But this is the exception rather than the rule. The rule is that one can treat the phenomenon by understanding where it stands, without transforming it, without reaching for some higher level of generality, and without making it ingredient in something else. Widengren cannot feel very comfortable with generalities, for his interest is in the specific rather than the generic. There is resistance to the generic unless it is forced by the specific. But this is the way of logical consistency: it is only a recognition of genera that allows one to differentiate between genus and species. And, it is only when a

---

24) I admit that I have played on the phrase "context of meaning" to describe Widengren's methodological tendencies recognizing full well that the phrase occurred to me after I had read Anders Nygren's explication of it. See his "From Atomism to Contexts of Meaning in Philosophy," in *Philosophical Essays Dedicated to Gunnar Aspelin* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1963), pp. 122-136. I confess that I find the phrase apt too with respect to Widengren's manner of analyzing historical data, and, beyond that, that the motif-research that is fostered in the one case is methodologically and structurally similar to the thematic analyses found appropriate in the second case.

higher level of generalization is brought into play that subordinate
or dependent levels are identified. Without the higher levels of
generalization, indeed, outside the conceptual dynamics of general-
ization itself, what genera calls species is not really species but
phenomena that haven't yet been graded. This is not to say that they
cannot be graded or even that they resist being graded or measured.
Nor is it to suggest that they are falsified when they are measured or
graded. It is simply to recognize that phenomena can be apprehended
without being inserted into special meaning schemes which function
by differentiating between genus and species, classes, and kinds.
Widengren knows that every particle need not be made party to
genus/species classification or transformed into an ingredient in some
higher form of unification.

An excellent example of this tendency in Widengren's approach
is provided in his comment in his symposium about the birth of his
interest in sacred kingship. He noted that when he studied sacred
kingship in the Psalms, his goal "was not to demonstrate any in-
fluence but in the first place to analyze the institution and ideas
connected with sacred kingship." He goes on to say that his "intention
was to study kingship in Iran, Mesopotamia, and Israel, each religion
apart." Two aspects of this statement are worthy of comment. First,
Widengren makes it apparent that he attempted to study sacred king-
ship in its particularity, that is, in its typical manner of portrayal.
He did not employ sacred kingship as a means of testing historical
influence or cultural continuity. In the second place, the statement
calls particular attention to the three words, "each religion apart".
Once again the emphasis is upon concreteness and particularity. He
did not begin with the notion of religion and then work toward the
specific religions. Nor was his interest in discovering those elements
which all religions may have in common. Rather, the religion of Iran,
Mesopotamia, and Israel are treated as distinct institutions and ac-
cording to the same manner of approach by which sacred kingship is
analyzed. They are not regarded as species. They are not treated as
examples; they are not constructed into components for some higher
or larger synthesis. Rather, the emphasis is upon understanding of
phenomena within its proper sphere of meaning, regardess of the
phenomenon which one attempts to understand.

Another good example of the same tendency is provided in Widen-

gren's classic work, *Religionsphänomenologie* [25]). A mere scrutiny
of the book's table of contents will indicate that the book is full of
information from the history of religions on many of the standard
topics within phenomenology of religion. Furthermore, the book is
arranged to consist of a series of essays on selected topics that are
regarded as being crucial to the content and configuration of religion.
The several topics are explored in both minute and almost encyclopedic
detail. But the book exhibits no interest in showing that these many
topics are manifestly interrelated. It is even difficult to know on
what basis Widengren made his selection of topics, perhaps on pre-
cedent, perhaps on others' authority, perhaps because he had done
more work on some of these themes than on others. In short, the
selection cannot escape the hint of being arbitrary; at the same time,
it is manifestly defensible, but on grounds Widengren senses no
great responsibility to articulate. Furthermore, the book gives pro-
minence to the word "phenomenology" in its title. As the title in-
dicates, the book is offered as a "phenomenology of religion." Widen-
gren intends that it be classified that way and that it serve that function
despite the fact that the book begins without introduction, and, unlike
standard philosophical phenomenologies, without prolegomena of any
sort [26]). In strictly philosophical terms it is probably not phenome-
nology at all, for it testifies to little if any dependence upon the dis-
cussions that have become part of the "phenomenological" traditions
inspired and fed by the writings of Edmund Husserl, Martin Hei-
degger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Alfred Schütz, Roman Ingarden,
Max Scheler, Paul Ricoeur, and the others [27]). Widengren knows

25) Geo Widengren, *Religionsphänomenologie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter,
1969).

26) When Widengren does engage in the writing of "prolegomena", as, for
example, in his essay "Prolegomena. The Value of Source-Criticism as Illu-
strated by the Biographical Dates of the Great Founders," in *Historia Religionum.*
Vol. I, edited by C. Jouco Bleeker (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), p. 1-22, he has
something very much different from essays on phenomenology and hermeneutics
in mind.

27) Similarly, when Widengren recounts the chronicle of the development of
phenomenology of religion, he begins not with its philosophical fathers but with
prominent historians of religion—Chantepie de la Saussaye, G. van der Leeuw,
etc.—who concentrated on phenomena. See Widengren's essay, "Some Remarks
on the Methods of the Phenomenology of Religion," in *Universitet Och Forsk-
ningen* (Festschrift for Torgny T. Segerstedt), (Uppsala, Almqvist and Wiksell,
1968), pp. 250-260, and reprinted in part in Capps, *Ways of Understanding
Religion, op. cit.,* pp. 142-151.

this material; in fact, he knows it well—at one time he had immersed himself in Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*. But his repeated pointings to the tradition inaugurated by Chantepie de la Saussaye indicate that his own "phenomenology" stems from a departure of a different sort. In the more prominent sense, Widengren's book does not pretend to be phenomenological analysis at all. It makes no attempt to demonstrate, for example, that the ingredients in its table of contents are necessary components of phenomenological portrayal nor that there is some deeper tie, presumably ontological, between all of its constituents parts. Furthermore, the book gives no evidence whatsoever of any interest in preparing the way for a science of a new field of experience, namely, transcendental subjectivity. Its intention, interests, language, and *modus operandi* are not those of phenomenology usually philosophically conceived. Clearly, it is a book of another sort. Consequently, while the book attempts to be comprehensive, it approaches this in such fashion that it cannot be faulted for leaving a chapter out. Neither, as has been noted, is its comprehensiveness articulated in such fashion that it implies or entails necessary connections between the items comprehended. Instead, Widengren's compelling interests run in another direction. He insists, for example, that phenomenologies of religion should not be attempted until after a scholar has done detailed, mastering work within very specific fields. It is as though one engages in phenomenological tasks after he has passed preliminary tests. One must be qualified, and qualification must be tested in specific contexts. The student does not begin his training in the history of religion by studying phenomenology. Rather, phenomenological training is taken up after one has demonstrated his ability in the necessary preliminary fields. These provisions must be implicit in the temperament which understands comprehensive projects to be engaged in after one has passed through the sort of preliminary initiation rites that strip one of those baser appetites which, left to follow their own devices, might have led to easy, excessive, and premature syntheses. As we have noted, it is to the simplistic, the excessive, and the intemperant synthesis that the Uppsala school takes exception. For that reason, Widengren can carry through on his project to write a "phenomenology of religion" without offering schemes by which ingredients become components and cumulative evidence produces more generalized conclusions.

It is in keeping with this general tendency that, when talking about religious syncretism, Widengren is prone to discuss Manichaeaism [28]. The choice of topics is provided for by the same rationale. Manichaeanism is an instance of "unmistakable religious syncretism". It is deliberately syncretistic for the very particular and historical reason that its founder, Mani, believed that in him was the summation of all previous religious wisdom. In talking about religious syncretism by referring to Machaeaism, Widengren is simply giving one more illustration of the characteristic methological tendency. He does not proceed by fitting instances to types, nor is his ultimate intention the correlation of types. Instead, the interpretive categories are created in order to treat very specific phenomena. Manichaeaism is deliberate religious syncretism. To call it that is to acknowledge its own understanding of itself, and this is to refer it to the frame of reference within which it can be treated. This manner of approach does not give one the opportunity to talk about how it is possible that religions can become syncretistic. It does not even afford an occasion to speculate about the limits of some syncretistic religious range. Instead, all Widengren has done is to focus in upon a particular pattern of religious determinateness and to call it by its proper name.

But this must be part of the genius of his approach. By virtue of the methodological framework to which he is committed, Geo Widengren is disposed toward treating syncretism as a dynamic process of fusion, union, or coalescence which sometimes occurs when a variety of religious themes interact or when one or more religious traditions join together. In Widengren's view, the syncretistic process is traceable; its ingredients can be distinguished and sorted; the dynamism of the phenomenon can be penetrated, or at least partially. But treating syncretism as a regulative principle of interpretation does not give one the right to make extraterritorial inferences. The process of syncretism is inaccessible apart from the concrete instances in which it has occurred. Widengren would not want his position to be defined

---

28) Cf. Widengren's *Mani and Manichaeism*, trans. from German edition by Charles Kessler and revised by the author (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965). The original work, *Mani und der Manichäismus* was published in Stuttgart in 1961. See also Widengren's *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism. Studies in Manichean, Mondean, and Syrian-Gnostic Religion, op. cit.* See also Jes P. Asmussen, "Manichaeism," in *Historia Religionum. op. cit.*, pp. 580-610.

in terms of its opposition to other orientations which build on meta-
physical claims and purport to be able to unveil ontological realities.
It is rather that he has embarked on another program, congruent
with the contentions of the philosophical school in which he was
trained, which program is designed to identify the specific features
of determination of given phenomena wherever these are found. When
syncretism registers as one of those features, or when it functions
in the formation of phenomena, it is accessible. Under these con-
ditions it can be treated, analyzed, and discussed. But it must enter
a context of inquiry to which the scholar has rightful access. Widengren
knows that religious syncretism is different from cultural contact, and
that these two are different from cultural influence and cultural conti-
nuity. Syncretism has a very specific meaning, and does not refer
roughly to all sorts of religious and cultural interaction. Syncretism takes
on a contextual meaning; one can detect and describe it when it occurs.
To go on from there to talk about the meaning of the context, or
about transformations of the context, is to expand the discussion into
other kinds of concerns. This Geo Widengren is unwilling ordinarily
to do, not because he lacks talent for it, but because its extrapolations
demand that cases and contexts be considered as species. And this
tends to imply that the more general is the more real, that contingency
implies necessity, or that the higher the level of abstraction the greater
the hold on truth. Furthermore, Widengren knows, as Wittgenstein
attested, that there can be a succession of contexts (games) with
manifest family likenesses, though what the several contexts share with
each other need not be the same, nor must the likenesses be identical in
every case. Context A may have a resemblance to Context B; Context
B may own some linkage with Context C; C may have likenesses with
D, D with E, or even A with C and/or D and/or E, and so on. But
the several contexts, related to each other in this fashion, need not be
related (or interrelated) on the same grounds.

   As we have indicated, Widengren finds "reality" in the specific
and the concrete. For him, one has gotten hold of truth when he is
able to describe the contours of a particular disposition. Thus, his
career, has consisted of a sustained series of attempts to comprehend
and describe the manner of determinateness of specific, historical
institutions, "each religion apart" first. It is a tribute to the consistency
of his craftmanship that he can present a full description of religious

syncretism, always concretely based, with example upon example, without ever violating the methodological principles which are characteristic of the Uppsala school. The irony is that this is an approach that makes generalizations on syncretism meaningful even though it is calculated to resist such generalizations or to avoid making them prematurely. And, it statistical evidence counts for anything, there is something to be said for the fact that alternative approaches are often forced to find refuge in methodological postures professional philosophers frequently have difficulty taking seriously.

THE ESSENCE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN ISLAM

BY

ISMA'ĪL R. al FĀRŪQĪ

Temple University, Philadelphia, Penn.

The title evidently presupposes that an essence of religious experience exists and that such an essence is knowable. Otherwise, the effort to discover such essence and to establish it for the understanding would be vain and futile. On this account, no statement about the essence of religious experience in Islam or any other religion can afford to overlook these methodological assumptions, or fail to establish them critically. Moreover, it is quite conceivable that some religions would — granted they have an essence — regard its critical establishment for the understanding as irreligious or even necessarily false. For the investigator to flout such attitude on the part of the religion in question is to commit the reductionist fallacy and hence to vitiate his own findings. This cannot be avoided unless the religion itself blesses the attempt, that is to say, unless it admits readily and unequivocally that it has an essence and that this essence is knowable. Three questions therefore mustt be answered in the positive before we proceed to our task; namely: Does the Islamic religious experience have an essence? Is it critically knowable? Does its critical establishment violate any constituent element of that experience?

To my knowledge, no Muslim thinker has ever denied that his religion has an essence. Granted that the question itself is a modern question and that the thinkers of the Middle Ages did not raise it in the manner we do today, we can still say with certainty that for all of them, Islam was religion, religion *par excellence,* indeed "the religion"; that it was a coherent, autonomous system of truths about reality, of imperatives for action and of desiderata for all kinds and levels of human activity. All of them affirmed that at the center of this system stood God, the knowledge of Whom they called *tawḥīd*; that the whole rest is a hierarchy of imperatives (*wājibāt*), recom-

mendations (*mandūbāt* and *makrūhāt*), prohibitions (*muharramāt*) and desiderata (*ḥasanāt*) — collectively called the sharīᶜah and knowledge of which the Muslims called *fiqh*.

As for the non-Muslim students of Islam, i.e. the orientalists, none of them raised this question except Wilfred C. Smith. From his inaugural lecture in 1952 to his opus magnum *The Meaning and End of Religion,* he consistently maintained that there is no such essence. He held that there are only Muslims whose Muslimness is a new thing with every morn, always changing. This is Heraclitean enough. But unlike fatalist, pessimist Heraclitus, who never entertained the possibility of changing the eternal flux of things, Smith definitely claimed the possibility and desirability of changing the direction of the infinite flux of states of Muslimness. How he identifies the object of change among countless other possible objects; and how will he be able to claim that a change of direction has or has not taken place from any point in the eternal flux, he never tells. Indeed, the Parmenidean-Platonic-Aristotelian-Kantian and phenomenological argument that change itself is inconceivable without a substrate that remains the same in the change has not impressed him as much as the metaphysical claim that all there is to the phenomenon of burning is the burning itself. In this philosophical inconsequence, he is not alone. A whole school of positivists, sceptics, cynics and pseudo-scientists have made the same claim.

Smith was the first orientalist to demand autonomy for the Islamics discipline, to condemn all interpretations of Islam made under alien categories. His essay "Comparative Religion: Whiter — and Why?" published in honor of Joachim Wach[1]) was the first and still is the classical statement of the Western student-of-religion's need for humility in front of the data of another religion; and the McGill University Institute of Islamic Studies, of which he was the architect and founder and which stood on the principle that the study of Islam must be cooperatively undertaken by Muslims and Westerners if it is to achieve any valid understanding of its subject matter,[2]) was for some time a living monument to this attitude. All this notwithstanding, Smith suspended this supreme demand when he came to discuss the

---

1) Mircea Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa, eds., *The History of Religions*: *Essays in Methodology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 31-66.

2) *Ibid.,* pp. 52-53. See also Institute of Islamic Studies brochures for 1952-61.

essence of Islam. Indeed, he devoted a substantial part of his book
to telling the Muslims what is a truer understanding of their scripture,
the Arabic Qur'ān. [3]) Against the fourteen centuries of Muslim
Qur'ānic scholarship and understanding, he concluded that the claim
that Islam was a system and has an essence is a relatively modern affair
arising out of three tendencies or processes of reification to which
the Muslims have been subject in history. These are: Influence of
the reified Near Eastern religions upon the Qur'ān, of the reifying
hypostases of Greek thought upon Islamic thought, and of modernist
apologetics. [4])

The first was merely claimed by Smith. The circumstantial fact that
Persian religion, Judaism and Christianity were already reified when
Islam made its appearance proves nothing. Any other form could well
have been adopted. In fact, the seventh century Near East was not
divided between two or three giant monolithic systems. A thousand
and one varieties of religious views belonging to every conceivable
part of the spectrum of religious development — from stone age
animism to philosophical mysticism — were evident on all shores of
the Mediterranean. Moreover, granted the "reification" of some Near
Eastern religious traditions, it takes other evidence besides factuality
to prove that this process was a change for the worse in the said Near
Eastern religions; that is to say, and as Smith holds, that it was one
in which piety and religiosity were giving place to a shell emptied of
religious feeling. Finally, there is still no reason why the increased
conceptual precision implied in reification may not be taken advantage
of by any man or movement within or without the said Near Eastern
religions. On the contrary, it would be strange indeed if any sub-
sequent movement omitted to take such advantage; if, in other words,
God had not done His homework in the course of study called "The
History of Religions". It would seem that if he is to prove his point,
Smith would have to establish the necessary incompatibility of reifi-

---

3) Another more recent discovery of the vanity of such claim was made by
J. S. Trimmingham who, after a long career in Islamic studies as well as Christian
mission to Muslim lands, wrote: "A Christian cannot tell a Muslim what the
Qur'ān means" (*Two Worlds Are Ours* [Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1971],
p. 161).

4) Wilfred C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: The
Macmillan Co., 1962, 1963), Chapter IV.

cation with religiosity. But this he has not done; and his claim remains unsubstantiated.

Secondly, it is an established fact that the Persian and Jewish religions had done nothing to proseletize Arabia, and that the extreme little which either of them did in Yaman was incidental to political imperialism and never amounted to anything worthy of being called "religious movement". It is historical fact that none of these religions had achieved any place or esteem in the mind of Makkah or among the *badw* living in the wide expanses of the desert. Zoroastrians, Jews and Christians were aliens inadmissible to the temple area as well as into the city of Makkah. They had to reside in the outskirts and to do so under the constant protection of native Arabs whose clients they were. Moreover, it is a fact that Persia encouraged Arab paganism to stand up before Byzantine Christianity, while the latter reconciled itself to peaceful coexistence with that paganism. [5]

As for the reifying hypostases of Greek thought, it is common knowledge that Hellenism began to invade Muslim letters and thought in the late eight and ninth centuries, two hundred years after the advent of Islam, whereas the so-called "reification" was complete with the birth of Islam itself. Its terminus is the life of the Prophet Muḥammad and its evidence, substance and text are the Qurʾān itself. Greek thought is hence utterly irrelevant to the question at hand. So is the argument from Muslim apologetics in modern times. Factual or otherwise as they may be, these arguments prove nothing if the "reified" result is Qurʾānic. [6]

---

5) Three reasons have presented themselves to explain this Byzantine will to co-existence with Arab paganism, namely: Theological affinity involving trin-itarianism, saviorism and intercessionism, and sacramentalism; lack of a will to mission promoted by interminable theological disputes; and a consuming interest in trade arrangements.

6) One should mention here that the statistical method used by Smith, and consisting of counting the incidence of the terms "Islām" and "Īmān" in the Qurʾān, in the titles of books mentioned by Carl Brockelmann in his famous *Geschichte,* is frivolous and misleading. Classical Muslim authors were not in the habit of using either the word *Islām* or *Imān* in their titles. In Smith's calculus, however, this fact counts against them. For the picture would be radically different if one realized what the ratio is of titles using either "Islām or "Īmān" to those using neither. Smith says he has looked over 25,000 titles (*The Meaning and End of Religion,* p. 298), but he omitted to tell his readers how many of these included the terms in question. He gave only the percentages of the uses.

It is here, i.e. as regards the Quʾrān, that Smith lays his weakest claim. Not only does he tell the Muslims what Qurʾānic meanings are but he takes the fanciest issues with their linguistic and exegetical scholars and makes some quite unusual pretensions. The term "Islam" in verses 3 : 85 ("Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted of him.") and 5 : 4 ("Today, I have completed for you your religion, made total My blessing which has been granted to you and accepted for you Islam as your religion.") are first interpreted as meaning "submission, obedience to His commands." Of course! any Muslim will retort! How can "Islam" not mean these things? And who has ever claimed the contrary? That "Islam" means these things is beyond question. But this for Smith means that the term means *nothing else*; above all, that it does not mean that "Islam" is a religion in the reified sense, i.e., a system of propositions, imperatives and desiderata. But this is an obvious *non sequitur*. That "Islam" means submission and personal piety does not preclude it from meaning a religious system of ideas and imperatives. If this is contended, the Muslims' understanding across the centuries is conclusive. That is why Smith resorted to the attempt to establish that, in the early Muslims' understanding, "Islam" connoted a personal attitude of piety rather than a religious system.

In pursuit of this objective, Smith took the definition of "Islam" by al Ṭabarī (died 302 AH/915 AC), namely "submission to My command and self-determination to obedience to Me," which al Ṭabarī continues with "in accordance with its obligations, prohibitions and notable recommendations prescribed by Me for your benefit." Unable to appreciate the sudden transfer from the addressive to the third person form of Arabic letters, Smith took the "obligations, prohibitions and notable recommendations" to refer to "command", rather than to "Islam", the *definiendum*. Arabically, this is utterly inacceptable. It throws the whole sentence upside-down and makes ugly brokenness out of its literary flow. If we may not question Smith's Arabic abilities, we must conclude that he had bent the language to suit a preconceived argument.

Secondly, the literal, obvious and commonsense meaning of verse 5 : 4, namely, "Today I have completed your religion for you . . .," Smith calls a "modern interpretation", a "nowadays" interpretation, and leads his reader to suppose that the understanding that this verse

signalled the completion of the religious system of Islam is an under-
standing of "nowadays", of modern times, of the decades after World
War II. 7)

This is not all. That the occasion of the revelation of this verse, as
well as the whole of sūrah "al Māʾidah" is the last pilgrimage of the
Prophet is an established historical fact beyond doubt. The same al
Ṭabarī, whom Smith reports as ignorant of the *Sitz-im-Leben* of
revelation of this verse, says on pages 524-529 of Volume IX of his
great *Tafsir* (Old Edition) that this verse was revealed "*fī yawmi
jumᶜah wa kāna yawmu ᶜArafāt, Yawm al waqfah, wa lam yaᶜish al
nabiyyu baᶜdahā illā wāḥidan wa thamānīna aw ithnayni wa thamānīna
yawman*" ("on a Friday which was the day of standing in worship on
Mount ᶜArafāt [the consummation of the Pilgrimage], and the Prophet
did not live any longer than 81 or 82 days thereafter.") A little further,
on page 531 of the same work, al Ṭabarī says verbatim: "*Hadhihi āyah
bi ᶜArafāt fī ḥujjat al wadāᶜ*" ("This verse was revealed on ᶜArafāt on
the occasion of the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage"). Is this not proof
enough that towards the end of his life, the Prophet received a reve-
lation which does in fact purport to declare the completion of the
revelation, of the religious system of Islam?

That this is the meaning of the verse was held at least as early as
al Jāhiz (died 253 AH/868 AC), who gave us in his *Al Bayān wa al
Tabyīn* the full text of the Prophet's farewell sermon, a century and
a half before al Ṭabarī. In the same place al Ṭabarī has carefully
reported, as if foreseeing Smith's misunderstanding of the whole affair,
that "other historians have indeed held that this verse was revealed
to the Prophet of God as he marched in his farewell pilgrimage." 8)
The story is complete in Ibn Saᶜd's *Al Ṭabaqāt al Kubrā* and practic-
ally every historian and reporter (*muḥaddith*) since. No one of these
had ever accused his colleagues or predecessors of such an invention
as Smith had accused them. In his work especially devoted to the
analysis of the historical *Sitz-im-Leben* of the Qurʾānic revelations
entitled *Asbāb al Nuzūl* (Cairo: M. B. Halaby, 1379/1959), Abū al

---

7) Smith writes: ["Today I have completed your religion for you"] is under-
stood by Muslims "nowadays .... as having been revealed accordingly, at the
very end of the Prophet's career, closing the exposition of Islam as a now
completed system" (Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 297).

8) *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 531.

Ḥasan ᶜAlī ibn Aḥmad al Wāḥidī (d. 468 AH/1096 AC) repeated the same claim in terms identical to those of Ṭabarī. Whereas al Zamakhsharī (d. 538 AH/1444 AC) the Muᶜtazilī rationalist, wrote in his exegesis, the whole story of the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage in 11 AH/632 AC, [9]) al Iskāfī, an earlier Qurʾānic scholar (d. 431 AH/ 1040 AC), held — contrary to Smith's allegation — that "Muslimūn" and "Muʾminūn" are synonymous terms and quoted verse 27 : 81 in support. It is in this verse that the Qurʾān defined *muslimūn* in terms of *īmān*. [10]) Even Ibn Isḥaq (d. 151 AH/768 AC) who gave us the earliest biography of the Prophet uses the term Islam in both the "reified" and non-reified" senses. In one passage he calls the Anṣār of Madīnah "the battalion of Islam." [11]) Smith's contention that reification was a later phenomenon does not stand a casual reading of any early Islamic source work. As for Smith's claim that al Ṭabarī remained silent — which we have just shown to be false — on the occasion of the verse in question, it is definitely an argument *e silentio* and more. For although Smith knew it was *e silencio,* he still found fit to mention it. Certainly then he wished his reader to suspect that the meaning of the verse was "apparently unknown in the third century to al Ṭabarī and to those of the Companions whose views he reports." [12]) Al Ṭabarī's silence should have kept Smith silent too, logically speaking, for to argue *e silencio* is to commit a fallacy. But it didn't. Smith's mistake is hence doubled.

II

What is the essence of religious experience in Islam?

At the core of religious experience in Islam stands God. The *shahādah* or confession of Islam asserts: 'ᶜThere is no God but God." The name of God "Allah", which simply means "the God", occupies the central position in every Muslim place, every Muslim action, every

---

9) *Al Kashashāf ᶜan Ḥaqāʾiq al Tanzīl wa ᶜUyūn al Aqāwīl fī Wujūh al Taʾwīl* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al Bābī al Ḥalabī, 1966), Vol. I, p. 593.

10) Muḥammad ibn ᶜAbdullah al Khaṭīb al Iskāfī, *Durrat al Tanzīl wa Ghurrat al Taʾwīl* (Cairo: Muḥammad Maṭar al Warrāq, 1909, p. 180). Here al Iskāfī asserts: "Falammā taqārabāt al Lafẓatān (i.e., muslimūn and muʾminūn) *wa kānatā tustaᶜmalāni limaᶜnā waḥid*...."

11) Muḥammad ibn Isḥaq ibn Yasār, *Sirāt al Nabiy, Ṣallā Allāhu ᶜAlayhi wa Sallam,* recension of Muḥammad ᶜAbdul Malik ibn Hishām (Cairo: Muhammad Ṣubayḥ), Vol. IV, p. 1073.

12) Smith, *op. cit.,* p. 297.

Muslim thought. The presence of God fills the Muslim's consciousness at all times. With the Muslim, God is indeed a sublime obsession. What does it mean?

Muslim philosophers and theologians have battled it out among themselves for centuries, and the issue culminated in the arguments of al Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd. For the philosophers, the issue was one of saving the orderliness of the universe. The world, they argued, is a *cosmos,* i.e., a realm in which order and law prevail, where things happen by a cause and causes cannot be without their proper effects. In this stand they were heirs to the Greek, the Mesopotamian and the Ancient Egyptian lagacies of religion and philosophy. Creation itself was for these traditions passage from chaos to cosmos. The Muslims entertained the highest ideas of transcendence and nobility of the divine being, but they could not conceive of that being as consistent with a chaotic world.

The theologians, for their part, feared that such an emphasis on the orderliness of the universe necessarily renders God a *deus otiosus;* that it leaves Him little to do once He has created the world and built thereinto the clockwork mechanisms necessary to set everything in causal motion. They were right. For a world in which everything happens according to a cause and where causes are all natural — i.e., in and from the world — is one in which everything happens necessarily and hence is a world which does not need God. Such a God would never satisfy the religious feeling. Either He is He by Whom everything is, by Whom everything that happens happens, or He is no God at all. By intricate argument, they showed that such a God as the philosophers taught was either ignorant of what happens, incapable of controlling or initiating it, or that there was some other God besides Him, who is the real cause and master of all. Hence, they rejected the philosophers' view and invented the doctrine called "occasionalism". This is the theory that at every moment of time, God recreates the world and thus makes happen all that happens therein. They replaced the necessity of causality with the trust that God, being just and righteous, will not deceive but will see to it that the right effect will always follow upon the right cause. The upshot of the matter was not the establishment of causality, but of divine presence, and of accomodating causality to that presence. The theologians carried a sweeping victory over the philosophers.

Behind the theologians' position stands the Muslim's experience, where God is not merely an absolute, ultimate first cause or principle but a core of normativeness. It is this aspect of God that suffers most in any theory where God becomes a *deus otiosus*; and it is the Muslim's responsiveness to this core of normativeness that the philosophers' theory throws out of joint.

God as normativeness means that He is the being who commands. His movements, thoughts and deeds are all realities beyond doubt, but everyone of these in so far as man conceives of it is for him a value, an ought-to-be, even when, in the case where it is already realized, no ought-to-do flows from it. Besides being metaphysical, God's ultimacy is not for the Muslim isolable from, or emphasizable at the cost of, the axiological. If we were to allow the Muslim here to use the category of "the value of knowledge", he would say that the value of the metaphysical is that it may exercise its imperativeness, its moving appeal or normativeness.

God is the final end, i.e., the end at which all finalistic *nexūs* aim and come to rest. Everything is sought for another which in turn is sought for a third and so on and hence demands the nexus or chain to continue until a final end is reached which is an end-in-itself. God is such an end, an end for all other ends, all chains of ends. He is the ultimate object of all desire. As such it is He Who makes every other good good; for unless the final end is posited, every link in the chain is undone. The final end is the axiological ground of all chains or *nexūs* of ends.

It follows from this conception of God as ultimate finalistic terminus and axiological ground that He must be unique. Obviously, if this were not the case, the question would have to be raised again regarding the priority or ultimacy of one to the other. It is of the very nature of a finalistic end to be unique. The Qurʾān has put it succinctly: "If there were other Gods in heaven and earth besides God, heaven and earth would have fallen down." [13]) It is this uniqueness which the Muslim affirms in his confession of faith, "There is no God but God." In the long history of religions, the Muslim's assertion of God's existence would have come late. Indeed God had told him in the Qurʾān that "there is no people unto whom he had not sent a prophet",

---

13) Qurʾān, 19: 35, 88-91; 21: 22, 29.

and that "no prophet but had been sent to teach the worship and service of God". But his assertion of the uniqueness of God is new. It brought a refreshing iconoclasm at a time and place where dualism and trinitarianism were the higher, and polytheism the lower state of religious consciousness. And, in order to purge that consciousness free once and for all, Islam demanded utmost care in the use of language and percepts appropriate to the unique God. "Father", "intercessor", "savior", "son", etc., were utterly banished from the religious vocabulary; and the uniqueness and absolute transcendence of the divine being were stressed that no man may claim any relation to God which all other men cannot claim. Islam held as a matter of principle that no man or being is one iota nearer to God than any other. That all creation is creaturely, that it stands on this side of the line dividing the transcendent from the natural, is the necessary presupposition of God's axiological ultimacy.

The relevance of this "unicity" of God to the religious life of the person is easier to grasp. Man's heart always harbors lesser deities than God, and human intention is nearly always beclouded with desiderata of varying orders of rank. The noblest intention is, as Kant had taught, the purest, i.e., purified from all objectives of *"die Willkür"*. And the purest, Islam teaches, is that of which God is the sole occupant after all *Willkür* objects are removed and banished.

To perceive God as core or normativeness, as an end whose very being is imperativeness and desirability, is not possible unless there are beings for whom this normativeness is normative. For normativeness is a relational concept. For it to be, there must be creatures for whom the divine command is both perceivable (and hence knowable) as well as realizable. Relationality is not relativity and should not be understood as implying that God is dependent upon, or needful for, man and his world. In Islam, God is self-sufficient; but this self-sufficiency does not preclude the creation of a world in which men find the imperativeness and realize its ought-to-be's. At the core of the Islamic religious experience, therefore, stands God Who is unique and Whose will is the imperative and guide for all men's lives. The Qurʾān has put it dramatically. It portrays God as announcing to His angels His intention of creating the world and placing therein a vicegerent to do His will. The angels object that such vicegerent who would kill, do evil and shed blood is unworthy of being

created. They also contrasted such vicegerent with themselves who
never swerve from fulfilling the divine will, to which God answers,
"I know something which you do not know". 14) Obviously, man
would indeed do evil — that is his prerogative as a free man. But for
anyone to fulfill the divine will when it is perfectly in his power to
do otherwise, is to fulfill a higher and worthier portion of the divine
will. The angels are ruled out precisely because they have no freedom
to violate the divine imperative. Likewise, in another still more dramatic
Qurʾānic passage, God offered His trust to heaven and earth, moun-
tains and rivers. These were struck with fear and panic and rejected
the trust. But man accepted the trust and assumed its burden." 15)
The trust, or divine will, which no heaven-and-earth can realize is the
moral law which demands freedom of the agent necessarily. In heaven-
and-earth, the will of God is realized with the necessity of natural
law. 16) It is His inalterable *sunnah* or pattern which, implanted in
creation, causes creation to run as it does. Natural law cannot be
violated by nature. Its total fulfillment is all that nature is capable of
doing. 17) But man, who boldly accepts the trust is capable of doing
the will of God. 18) Only he, therefore, of all creatures, satisfies the
prerequisite of moral action, namely freedom. Moral values are more
conditioned than the elemental values of nature since they presuppose
them. Equally, they presuppose the utilitarian or instrumental values
and stand therefore higher than either of these. Evidently, they are
the higher part of the divine will which necessitated the creation of
man and his appointment as the vicegerent of divinity on earth.

Because of this endowment, man stands higher than the angels, for
he can do more than they. 19) He can act morally, i.e., in freedom,

---

14) Qurʾān, 2: 30.

15) Qurʾān, 33: 72, 6: 166.

16) .... "There is no altering to God's creation. That is the right religion;
though most men do not know". Qurʾān 30: 30. Further elaborations of the theme
may be read in 2: 164; 3: 5; 8: 3; 6: 59; 95- 99; 7: 54; 10: 5-6; 18; 61; 11: 6;
16: 49; 20: 6; 25: 45-53; 27- 59: 65; etc., etc.

17) "There is no change in God's (*sunnah*) pattern of action". Qurʾān 33: 62;
35: 43; 48: 23.

18) "Whoever wills to believe, or to disbelieve, does so of his own accord
(Qurʾān, 18: 29). God does not change the situation of any group of men until
they transform their own selves (*Ibid.* 13: 11) .... Whatever man has earned,
he will certainly be given (*Ibid.,* 10: 44; 6: 70; 53: 40). Man's capacity for evil
is stressed in 4: 27; 17: 11, 67; 14: 34; 42: 48, 70: 19; 80: 17; 100: 5; 103: 3.

19) Qurʾān, 15: 28-34.

which they cannot. Man equally shares the necessity of natural caus-
ation in his vegetative and aminal life in his physical presence as a
thing among htings on earth. But as the being through whom the higher
part of God's will can be realized, he stands absolutely without peer.
His is a cosmic vocation, a genuine *khilāfat,* or vicegerence of the
divine order.

It would indeed be poor, uncoordinated work on the part of God
if He had created such a cosmic creature as man without enabling
him to know His will; or placed him on an earth which is not malleable
enough to receive man's discharge of his ethical vocation, or on one
where the doing or not-doing of that will would make no difference.

To know the divine will, man was given revelation, a direct and
immediate disclousre of what God wants him to realize on earth.
Wherever the revelation was corrupted, perverted, or forgotten, God
has repeated the performance, taking into consideration the relativities
of history, the changes in space and time, all to the purpose of keeping
within man's reach a ready knowledge of the moral imperatives.
Equally, man is endowed with senses, reason and understanding, in-
tuition, all the perfections necessary to enable him to discover the
divine will unaided. For that will is imbedded not only in causal nature,
but equally in human feelings and relations. Whereas the former half
takes an exercise of the discipline called natural science to discover it,
the second half takes the exercise of the moral sense and the discipline
of ethics. The discoveries and conclusions are not certain. They are
always subject to trial and error, to further experimentation, further
analysis and to correction by deeper insight. But, all this notwith-
standing, the search is possible, and reason cannot despair of re-
examining and correcting its own previous findings without falling
into skepticism and cynicism. Thus, knowledge of the divine will is
possible by reason, certain by revelation. Once perceived, the desir-
ability of its content is a fact of human consciousness. Indeed, the
apprehension of value, the suffering of its moving appeal and deter-
minative power, is itself the "knowledge" of it. For to know value is
to lose one's ontological poise or equilibrium and to roll in the direction
of it, that is to say, to suffer change, to begin the realization of its
ought-to-be, to fulfill the ought-to-do which issues therefrom. As the
leading American empiricist, C. I. Lewis, used to say: "The appre-
hension of value is an experience and is itself a 'value-ing'."

So much for the consequences of religious experience in Islam for the theory of man. We ought now to consider the implications for soteriology and history. We have already mentioned the malleability of the world, its readiness to be in-formed, rekneaded, remoulded and cut so as to make it a concretization of the divine pattern. This preparation, together with the availability of revelation and the promise of a critical establishment of the divine will by reason, all render unpardonable the failure of man to fulfill his vicegerency. Indeed, fulfillment of his vocation is the only condition Islam knows for man's salvation. 20) Either it is his own doing or it is worthless. 21) Nobody can do the job for him, not even God, without rendering him a puppet. This follows from the nature of moral action, namely, it is not itself, that is moral, unless it is freely willed and undertaken to completion by a free agent. Without the initiative and effort of man, all moral worth or value falls to the ground. 22)

Islamic soteriology therefore is the diametrical opposite of that of traditional Christianity. Indeed, the term "salvation" has no equivalent in the religious vocabulary of Islam. There is no saviour and there is nothing from which to be saved. Man and the world are either positively good or neutral, but not evil. 23) Man begins his life ethically sane and sound, not weighed down by any original sin, however mild or Augustinian. 24) In fact, he is at birth already above the zero point in that he has the revelation and his rational equipment ready for use,

---

20) See n. 18 above. "Whoever accepts this guidance (the Qurᵓānic revelation) does so to his own merit, and whoever errs does so to his own demerit ... Teach the Qurᵓān, that man may learn that it is by his own deeds that he delivers himself to ruin". Qurᵓān, 10: 44; 6: 70.

21) "On that day [the Day of Judgement] men will rise severally to be shown their own works. Then, whoso has done an atom's weight of evil will also see it returned". Qurᵓān, 97: 7-9. [On that day] .... As for him whose scales are heavy with good works, he will have the pleasant existence; but as for him whose scales are light, Hell will be his destination". *Ibid,* 101: 7-10.

22) "God does not require of any person except that of which he is capable". Qurᵓān, 23: 62. "God burdens no soul beyond its capacity. It shall have the reward it earns and it shall get the punishment it incurs .... Our Lord, burden us not with what we have not the strength to bear" .... *Ibid.,* 2: 282, 287.

23) "And orient yourself to the service of God, as the religion has directed. That is natural, the very nature which God had inbedded within you, as well as in mankind. That is the right religion." Qurᵓān, 30: 30.

24) A tradition of the Prophet says: "Man is born a Muslim [considering that Islam is natural religion, *Ur-religion*]. It is his parents which Judaize or Christianize him".

as well as a world all too ready to receive his ethical deed. His religious felicity (the term Islam uses is *falāḥ,* which comes from the root meaning "to grow vegetation out of the earth") consists of his fulfillment of the divine imperative. He can hope for God's mercy and forgiveness, but he may not count on it while refraining from doing the divine will whether out of ignorance, laziness or blatant defiance. His fate and destiny are exactly what he himself makes them to be. God's government is just, neither favorable nor unfavorable. Its scale of justice is absolutely that of the most precise and perfect balance. And its system of wordly and otherwordly rewards and punishments disposes for everyone, whether blest or unblest, exactly what he deserves. [25])

Islamic religious experience had great consequence for world history. The fire of the Muslim's vision caused him to hurl himself onto the stage of history therein to effect the realization of the divine pattern his Prophet had communicated to him. Nothing was for him worthier than this cause. In its interest, he was prepared to pay the maximum price, that of laying down his life. True to its content, he regarded his stage as consisting of the whole world, of his *ummah* as consisting of mankind less a few recalcitrants whom he sought to bring within the fold by force of arms. His *pax Islamica,* which stood on his arms, was never conceived as a monolithic society in which Islam alone predominates. It included Jews, Chistians, Sabeans by Qurʾānic authority, Zoroastrians by Muḥammadan authority, and Hindus and Buddhists by the jurists' extrapolation of that authority. The ideal remained the same, namely, a world in which, as the Qurʾān puts it, "the divine word is supreme", and everybody recognizes that supremacy. But such recognition to be worth anything at all must be free, the deliberate decision of every person. That is why to enter into the *pax Islamica* never meant conversion to Islam, but entry into a peaceful relationship wherein ideas are free to move and men are free to convince and be convinced. Indeed, the Islamic state put all its resources at the disposal of Jewish society, Christian society, Hindu and Buddhist society, whenever

---

25) All these principles of Islamic ethics can easily be substantiated by quotations from the Qurʾān, the supreme Islamic authority. The reader is kindly referred to the topical selections on pp. 319-337 of *The Great Asian Religions,* ed. and compiled by Chan, al Faruqi, *et. al.* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969).

these sought her autority to bring back into line with Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism any member who defied or transcended that line. The Islamic state was the only non-Jewish state where the Jew was not free to de-Judaize himself, or to rebel as a Jew against the authority of Judaism. The same applied to the Christian, Hindu or Buddhist. Whereas, up to his Emancipation in the nineteenth century, the European Jew who defied the directive of his *Bayt ha Din* could only be excommunicated — such excommunication making of him a lawless man, awaited just outside the walls of the ghetto by the Christian state or any non-Jew to be dispossessed and killed — the oriental Jew who defied his *Bayt ha Din* was corrected by the Islamic state in the name of his rabbis. This constitutes an ultimate proof of the Muslim understanding of the divine trust as ethical.

III

The essence of religious experience in Islam, we may say in conclusion, is the realization that life is not in vain; that it must serve a purpose the nature of which cannot be identical with the natural flow of appetite to satisfaction to new appetite and new satisfaction. For the Muslim, reality consists of two utterly disparate orders, the natural and the transcendent; and it is to the latter that he looks for the values by which to govern the flow of the former. Having identified the transcendent realm as God, he rules out any guidance of action that does not proceed therefrom. His rigorous *tawḥīd* (or unization of divinity) is, in final analysis, a refusal to subject human life to any guidance other than the ethical. Hedonism, eudaemonism and all other theories which find moral value in the very process of natural life are his *bête noire*. In his view, to accept any of them is to set up other gods besides God as guide and norm of human action. *Shirk,* or association of other gods with God is really the mixing up of the moral values with the elemental and ulilitarian which are all instrumental and never final.

To be a Muslim is precisely to perceive God alone (that is, the Creator, and not nature or the creature) as normative, His will alone as commandment, His pattern alone as constituting the ethical desiderata of creation. The content of the Muslim's vision is truth, beauty and goodness; but these for him are not beyond the pale of his noetic faculties. He is therefore an axiologist in his religious disciplines of

exegesis, but only to the end of reaching a sound deontology, as a jurist. Justification by faith is for him meaningless, unless it is the simple introduction into the arena of action. It is there that he claims his best, as well as his worst. For he knows that as man, he stands alone between heaven and earth with none but his axiological vision to show the road, his will to commit his energies to the task and his conscience to guard against pitfalls. His prerogative is to lead the life of cosmic danger; for no God is there to do the job for him. Not only is the job done if and when he has done it for himself, but he cannot withdraw. His predicament, if he has any by nature, is that he must carry the divine trust to complete realization or perish, as a Muslim, in the process. Surely, tragedy lurks behind every corner in his path. But that is also his pride. As Plato had put it, he is "doomed to love the good".

GOD'S THRONE AND THE BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM OF THE QUR'ĀN

BY

THOMAS J. O'SHAUGHNESSY. S.J.

Manila/Philippines

The Qur'ān speaks twenty-two times of God's throne. Sometimes the word means the royal seat from which God rules or on which angelic ministers carry Him. Elsewhere it symbolizes His kingship and supreme dominion. But in all its occurrences it has a certain determinate character, *"the* throne", and is mentioned with reverence accorded it from its close association with the divine. This fits in with the Biblical use of the word as a poetic figure for the place of God's presence as well as with the rabbinic interpretation that sees in the throne a premundane reality.

The fairly late appearance of "the throne" in the Qur'ān confirms its Scriptural and rabbinic origins. Muhammad had been preaching publicly for six or seven years when he first used the word in a surah (43.82) proclaimed towards the end of the second Meccan period, [1] around 618 or 619 A.D. It is around this time too that details from the *haggada* begin to enter more often into his exhortations. As Muhammad's career evolves, the Jewish tone of his materials becomes more pronounced. The Medinan surahs especially, given out after 622, are full of words and references drawn from rabbinic sources. It may indeed have been the strongly Jewish quality of the Qur'anic throne that led Bell to question its use in Mecca at all. He would incline

---

1) Muhammad promulgated the Qur'ān over a period of about twenty years. Since its present arrangement is not chronological, Muslim scholars and European Orientalists have proposed various orderings. Régis Blachère in his translation (*Le Coran,* Paris: Maisonneuve, 1949-51) adopts, with a few exceptions, the sequence of Theodor Nöldeke (*Geschichte des Qorāns,* second edition. Leipzig: Dieterich'sche, 1909-38. Today, however, Richard Bell's method (*The Qur'ān Translated, with a Critical Arrangement of the Surahs,* Edinburgh: Clark, 1937-39) of dating groups of verses rather than whole chapters is usually considered to agree better with the way in which the Qur'ān actually originated. See W. Montgomery Watt, "The Dating of the Qur'ān: A Review of Richard Bell's Theories," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 1957, 53-54.

rather to date the term from the early years in Medina when Jewish influence on Muhammad was dominant.

The Qur᾽ān talks of God's throne almost always in well defined stereotypes. This makes it possible to divide the twenty-two texts into four groups: "the Lord of the throne," "the throne-bearers," "the thone-sitter," and "the possessor of the throne." Three of these groups each illustrate a definite theme but the fourth is applied indiscriminately to several.

THE LORD OF THE THRONE—MONOTHEISM

The texts of the first group use "the throne" incidentally, as part of a title for God. All six propose the same theme: God is one and has neither equal nor associate. In the approximate order of their proclamation [2]) together with enough of their context to make them intelligible they are as follows:

> 43.82. Say (O Muhammad): If the Merciful had a child, I would be the first of those worshipping. Glory be to the Lord of the heavens and the earth, *the Lord of the throne*! (He is far) from what they depict.
>
> 21.22. Had there been in either of them (heaven and earth) deities besides God, both (heaven and earth) would have collapsed in disorder. Glory be to God, *the Lord of the throne*! (He is far) from what they depict.
>
> 23.86/88. [3]) Say (O Muhammad): Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and *the Lord of the magnificent throne*? They will answer: (They belong) to God. Say: Will you then not fear Him?
>
> 23.115/117. So exalted be God, the King, the truth! There is no deity but He, *the Lord of the honorable throne* ...
>
> 9.129/130. So if they turn their backs, say (O Muhammad): God is enough for me. There is no deity but He. On Him have I relied. He is *the Lord of the magnificent throne*.
>
> 27.26. God ... brings out the hidden in the heavens and the earth. He knows what you hide and what you reveal. God! There is no deity but He, *the Lord of the magnificent throne*.

In the traditional Muslim order of surahs [4]) and in Blachère's chrono-

---

2) The order adopted is that of Bell. When he indeterminately calls one of the throne-texts Meccan or Medinan, Blachere's sequence is used to locate the text more definitely in one of four periods—three Meccan, running from 612 to 622 A.D., and one Medinan from 622 to 632. New translations have been made of Our᾽anic verses cited in order to bring out more clearly the parallels in the Arabic original. The sense is generally that of the standard English versons, any departures from it being explained when they occur.

3) The verse number before the diagonal is that of the Egyptian editions of the Qur᾽ān; that after it is that of G. Flugel (*Corani Textus Arabicus,* third ed.; Lipsiae: Tauchnitz, 1883).

4) This order can be found after the title in the official Egyptian edition. It

logical sequence all but one (9.129/130) of the above six texts occur
in Meccan surahs. Bell, however, classifies the last four as Medinan
additions to their contexts and, as seen above, questions the Meccan
origin even of the first two. Nevertheless a date in the second Meccan
period is preferable for the first (43.82) because of the appellative
"the Merciful" there substituted for God. The last text (27.26) which
forms part of the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba is Medinan,
as appears from the frequent use of the word *muslim* in its context. [5])

The ordering adopted in the above list is also confirmed by the
parallels in thought in the first two ("He is far from what they
depict") and the last three ("no deity but He") as well as by the
introduction of modifiers for the throne in the last four passages. The
Qur'ān uses such modifiers here and elsewhere to enliven phrases
that had begun to pall through use. Hence their presence in a text
normally indicates material proclaimed at a later date.

In three of these six texts the throne is associated with the heavens
and the earth and in a fourth with the heavens alone. This association
is also found in most of the throne-texts of the Old Testament [6]) and
would substantiate a late Meccan or a Medinan date for this group.

The first part of 23.115/117 speaks of man's creation and his
accountability before God. Calling God "the truth" here would also
seem an indirect allusion to His creative activity. Certain Qur'anic
passages us *al-ḥaqq* (the truth) in the rabbinic sense of divine power
active both in the original creation of man and in the resurrection or
second creation to be accomplished at the end of the world. [7]) In Surah
22.5f, for example, God is called "the truth" because He created men

---

is substantially that of ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalkāfī (Nöldeke, *Geschichte*,
I, 59-60).

   5) See Bell, *The Qur'ān*, p. 363.

   6) Explicitly in Is 37.16; 40.22; 66.1; 1 Kgs 22.19; 2 Chr 18.18; Ps 11(10).4;
and 103(102).19.

   7) For the dynamic connotation of *alêtheia-'emeth* see Gerhard Kittel, *Theo-
logisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, I, 238, 19-22, and 241, 14-16, and
compare Surah 6, 72f, "On the day when He utters 'Be' and it is, *His word is the
truth*." Ṭabarī in his commentary (Maymaniyyah ed., VII. 143) gives as one
interpretation of this last mentioned "truth" God's creative command. See also
Journal of the American Oriental Society, XCI (1971), 214-15 and 218. This
sense of the word in the Qur'ān has probably been influenced by the Biblical
ḥoq, "decree," "limit," used in creation contexts in Job 28.26f; Ps 148.6; Prv
8.29; and Jer 5.22. In the New Testament compare James' (1.18) use of "the word
of truth" in a context of eschatological creation.

and plant life and because He will one day accomplish the second creation or the resurrection of the dead. The Muslim commentator Zamakhsharī also interprets *al-ḥaqq* as God's creative command in his comment on the following passage.

> 19.34/35f. That is Jesus, son of Mary, the utterance of *al-ḥaqq* about whom they doubt. It is not for God to have offspring. Glory be to Him! When He decrees (the creation of) a thing, He merely says to it "Be" and it is.

Jesus is called *qawla 'l-ḥaqq* (the word of truth), he explains, because like Adam he was produced by God's creative word "Be" without the help of a human father.

But the notion of creation is incidental to this group of texts. The main thrust in all of them is towards monotheism. All six affirm God's unicity, the earlier ones less explicitly and the last three more emphatically: God is unique; He generates no offspring (43.82); a plurality of gods would throw the universe into disorder (21.22); God shares the heavens and the throne with no other god (23.86/88); there is no deity but He (23.115/117; 9.129/130; and 27.26).

This is also the main burden of the second Meccan period in which the first texts of this group originate. Up to now monotheism had been presupposed, and the early surahs are mainly eschatological in content. But from about 616 on God's unicity becomes a dominant theme in Muhammad's preaching. In surah after surah he heaps rebukes on his countrymen for worshipping the false gods of the Meccan pantheon. [8]

The linking up of God's throne with His unicity in the Qurʾān, sometimes even as a quasi argument, is better understood from the role the throne plays in Jewish aprocryphal and rabbinic literature. Although created, it there possesses qualities that raise it above other creatures and bring it closer to God: it is made from light; it originates before the world began; it is inaccessible and endowed with a certain transcendance.[9] Notions like these underlie the Qurʾanic use of "the throne, honorable and magnificent," almost as a synonym of God Himself. In 2.255/256, for example, it is said to "encompass the heavens and the earth," while in 40.7 it is God Himself who "encompasses all things in mercy and in knowledge."

---

8) Blachère, *Le Coran,* pp. 6 and 132.

9) 2 Enoch 25.4; 22.2; 4 Ezra 8.21. R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), II, 445 and n. 4; 442-43; and 594.

The Muslim commentators also expand on this theme, calling the throne the first and greatest of all bodies which contains all others. [10] Inspired by Neo-Platonic speculations, they conceive the throne and the heavens as the source of unchanging essences which do not generate and are free from the limitations of matter. If, then, Bayḍāwī concludes, the throne and the heavens are endowed with a certain unicity of their own, how much more is this true of their originator and creator. [11]

Associated with the preceding group of six texts in affirming the divine unicity and in joining the throne with the heavens and the earth is the famous Throne Verse, 2.255/256, just referred to. Dating from early in Medina, it is the only passage to use *kursī*, an Aramaic loanword, for God's throne instead of the Arabic *ᶜarsh*. That the two are synonyms is clear from the one other use of *kursī* in the Qurᵓān (38.34/33) for Solomon's throne.

> 2.255/256. God! There is no deity but He.... To Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is in the earth.... His *throne* encompasses the heavens and the earth. Conserving them both does not tire Him. He is the sublime, the magnificent One.

THE THRONE-BEARERS—JUDGMENT

The Throne Verse, as noted above, resembles 40.7 in that it substitutes the throne, as a symbol of omnipresence and dominion, for God Himself. This same verse 7 in Surah 40 is also one of three passages that develop the next throne theme to occur in the Qurᵓān, that of divine judgment. Bell dates the first of the three from late at Mecca and the second and third from sometime in the first three years at Medina.

> 69.17. When a single blast is sounded on the trumpet... the heaven will be torn apart.... At its edges will be the angels, above whom eight on that day will *carry the throne* of your Lord.
>
> 39.75.... on Resurrection Day (vv. 67ff)... the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand... and the trumpet will be sounded... You will see the angels *surrounding the throne,* singing the praise of their Lord. And between them judgment will be given in truth....
>
> 40.7. Those who *carry the throne and* those who *surround it* sing the praise of their Lord and believe in Him. They ask pardon for the faithful (saying): O Lord of ours, You encompass all thngs in mercy and in knowledge. Forgive those who repent.. and save them from the punishment of hell.

---

10) Bayḍāwī, *Anwāru 't-tanzīl* on 27.26 and 23.115/117 and Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, on 9.129/130.

11) Bayḍāwī on 43.82.

The imagery in these passages is basically Scriptural with an admixture of elements drawn from later Jewish apocryphal tradition. God's throne is over the heads of the living creatures and of the Cherubim in the Prophecies of Ezechiel and Isaiah. Isaiah, Kings, and Chronicles represent the army of heaven surrounding it on the right and left while six-winged Seraphim hover above. [12]) In the apocryphal writings like the Book of Enoch, Ezekiel's *ḥayyōth* and *kᵉrūbhīm* become a high order of angels [13]) who no longer support the throne, but act as its guards. [14])

The throne in Ezekiel is associated with a sentence to be passed on Israel, while in Daniel 7.9-15 the Ancient of days presides from his throne over a more universal judgment. In the same apocalyptic vein the three Qurᵓanic passages picturing the throne with its ministering angels deal with the Final Judgment of mankind at the end of time. The first text (69.17) resembles Ezekiel's vision and is part of a theophany climaxed by the appearance of the Lord borne in on His throne to judge the world. The second (39.75), together with its context, describes Resurrection Day and makes explicit mention of a "truthful" judgment to be passed on creatures according to their services. [15]) The context of the third, as well as the passage itself (40.7), mentions the reward and punishment that are the outcome of the judgment. They also picture the angels imploring a favorable sentence for the faithful. Although this text is close in time to that preceding it and, as Bell surmises, may have been inspired by the defeat at Uḥud in March, 625, it conjoins elements from the previous two: angels in this passage not only carry the throne but also surround it and sing God's praise.

---

12) Ez 1.22, 26, and 28; 10.1; Is 37.16; 6.1; 1 Kgs 22.19; 2 Chr 18.18.

13) Book of Enoch 61.10 and 71.7; Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,* II, 226 and 236. See also G. A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1951), p. 114.

14) R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John* (2 vols.; New York: Scribner's Sons, 1920), I, 120. Other details from the *haggada* about the singing angels and the living creatures bearing the throne are supplied by George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (3 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927-30), I, 368 and 412f.

15) Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf,* and Bayḍāwī *ad loc.*

The Throne-Sitter—Creator As Absolute Lord

A group of eight texts originating shortly before the Hijrah is distinctly apocalyptic in its imagery. It depicts God, after creating heaven and earth in six days, seated upon His throne and guiding the universe. All but one (57.4) of these texts occur in surahs of the second or third Meccan periods, but Bell considers both this and the other seven as revisions of Meccan material dating in their present form from around the Hijrah or shortly after it. In approximate chronological order the group is as follows.

> 20.4/3f. A revelation from Him who created the earth and the lofty heavens. The Merciful *on the throne sat down.* He owns what is in the heavens, what is in the earth, what is between them both, and what is under the ground.
>
> 11.7/9. It is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days and *His* throne was upon the water.
>
> 25.59/60. Trust in the Living One ... of His servants' sins sufficiently aware, who created the heavens and the earth and what is between them both in six days. Then He *sat down on the throne,* the Merciful.
>
> 32.4/3f. It is God who created the heavens and the earth and what is between them both in six days. Then He *sat down on the throne.* Besides Him you have no helper and no intercessor.... He directs the command from the heaven to the earth; then it ascends to Him in a day whose length is a thousand years of those you count.
>
> 13.2f. It is God who raised up the heavens without pillars you see. Then He *sat down on the throne* and He made the sun and the moon render service; each runs for a definite time. He directs the command; the signs He makes plain; perhaps you will be convinced of the encounter with your Lord.
>
> 10.3. Your Lord indeed is God who created the heavens and the earth in six days. Then He *sat down on the throne.* He directs the command. No one may make intercession except after His permission....
>
> 57.4. It is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days. Then He *sat down on the throne.* He knows what goes into the earth and what comes out of it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends to it....
>
> 7.54/52. Your Lord indeed is God who created the heavens and the earth in six days. Then He *sat down on the throne....* And (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars to render service by His command. Are not creation and the command His own?

A closer inspection of these texts reveals several elements that occur in different combinations over the three or four years around the time of the Hijrah when Muhammad announced them as God's revelation. The introductory words of the different passages fall into two or three fixed formulas. The inverted phrases, "the earth and the lofty heavens" and "the Merciful on the throne sat down" of the earliest text, soon take on the stereotyped forms, "the heavens and the earth" and "then He sat down on the throne," maintained in all the subsequent passages.

LATE MECCAN TEXTS			MEDINAN TEXTS				
20. 4/3 ff A revelation from One who created	11. 7/9	25. 59/60 Trust in One . . .aware who created	32. 4/3f	13. 2f	10. 3	57. 4	7. 54/52
	It is He who created		It is God who created	It is God who raised up		It is He who created	
					Your Lord indeed is God who created		Your Lord indeed is God who created
the earth and the lofty heavens							
	the heavens and the earth	the heavens and the earth	the heavens and the earth		the heavens and the earth	the heavens and the earth	the heavens and the earth
				the heavens			
and what is between them both		and what is between them both	and what is between them both				
	in six days	in six days	in six days		in six days	in six days	in six days
the Merciful on the throne sat down		then He sat down on the throne, the Merciful	then He sat down on the throne	then He sat down on the throne	then He sat down on the throne	then He sat down on the throne	then He sat down on the throne
	and His throne was upon the water						
			He directs the command	He directs the command	He directs the command		By His command
			from the heaven to the earth			it descends from the heaven	
			then it ascends to Him			it ascends to it	
				He made the sun and the moon render service			to render service (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars

The reason for the first inversion, according to Baydāwī's comment on this verse, is the logical order here adopted: the earth is in first place because it is more evident to the senses than the "high heavens." This and the other inversion, however, are more probably due to the requirements of rhyme, since the phrase in its usual order appears two verses later (in 20.6/5) in a clause which Bell and Blachère date from the same time as 20.4/3f. The inversions also confer an air of dignity on the surah to which they form the solemn introduction.

It is a curious coincidence that the Syriac word *taqēn*, "he formed" or "he created" when this action is attributed to God the Son, also means "he was settled firmly" when used in conjunction with "on the throne." Other passages proclaimed during the middle and late Meccan periods show similarities with Syriac monastic tradition. The association of the two ideas in this instance may possibly have some basis in the Syro-Arabic jargon used as a medium of communication between the Syrian Christian ascetics and the Arab nomads. [16])

The third text (25.59/60) retains one small detail in common with the first in its use of "the Merciful One," a characteristic phrase of the second Meccan period [17]) in which both originated. Later texts, which Bell dates from early in Medina, embellish the scene of the Creator on His throne with allusions to the creative command and to the sun and moon submissively yielding their services. These developments appear more clearly in the adjoining chart.

In this whole group of texts God's throne is mentioned in conjunction with His creating the universe. In seven out of the eight He takes His place on the royal seat immediately after accomplishing this work of power and wisdom. On first hearing these passages, then, the audience might understand Muhammad to be saying simply that it was God who created the world. But in reality the words would seem to convey the primitive Israelitic tradition transmitted by Deutero-Isaiah: "Since the earth was founded, he sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, ... who stretches out the heavens like a curtain." These verses, as Westermann and Duhm point out, contain words

---

16) Arthur Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Orient* (Louvain: Corpus Script. Christ. Orient., 1958-60), II, 351; Alphonse Mingana, "Syriac Influence on the Style of the Ḳorᵓān," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester,* XI (1927), 79-80.

17) Blachère, *Le Coran,* p. 69.

like "circle," "curtain," and "stretch out" used but rarely in the Old Testament and always in the context of creator and creation. This suggests a traditional formula in which Israel praised the Creator, not merely by acknowledging His creative activity, but by affirming that God, who created the universe, is absolute lord of its inhabitants and its natural forces. [18])

The picture drawn in Israel's tradition as well as in the Qurʾān is one of purposeful activity, of majestic tranquillity, and finally of vast power in repose. John takes up the same theme in the Apocalypse, where He who sits on the throne is almost a synonym for God-the-Creator whose glory admits no shadow of obscurity. [19] Jesus uses a similar primitive Jewish formulation to describe, in the apocalyptic style of Deutero-Isaia 65.17 and 66.22, the "new age" (*paliggenesia*) when the Son of Man will sit on the throne of His glory. [20])

The Muslim commentators confirm this meaning of the clause, "He sits down on the throne," by explaining it as a figurative equivalent of "he is king." [21]) Bayḍāwī says that the expression means that God has no need to rest or recuperate His strength and that the throne possessed is the equivalent of dominion.[22])

The third text (25.59/60) combines elements found in the first two. After the common introduction "who created," it carries over from 20.4/3f three notions, "the Merciful," "He sat down on the throne," and "what is between them both (that is, between heaven and earth)." The phrase "in six days" has already occurred in 11.7/9, and has Scriptural counterparts in Ex 20.11 and Gn 1.31. The Christian Syriac writer Aphraates also introduces it in a discussion showing that God ceased working after six days, but not because of weariness. [23])

The reference to God's throne "upon the water" appears only in 11.7/9 and comes ultimately from the Old Testament (Ps 29.10). The Hebrews regarded the earth as flat and borne up on pillars above the

18) Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969), pp. 56-57, commenting on Is 40.22.

19) Kittel, TWNT, III, 165, 35; 166, 1-4; and 1029, 18-26.

20) Alexander Jones, *The Gospel according to St Matthew* (London: Chapman, 1965), p. 221, and Bruce Vawter, *The Four Gospels, an Introduction* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), p. 281, commenting on Mt 19.28.

21) Zamakhsharī and Jalālayn on 20.4/3.

22) Bayḍāwī on 7.54/52.

23) Aphraatis Demonstratio XIII, *De Sabbato*, n. 10 (*Patrologia Syriaca*, R. Graffin and I. Parisot, edd., Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1894-1926, I, 561-64).

surrounding oceans. The overarching vault of the firmament supported
another sea of water above, the source of rain and snow. Above this
second sea God lived, transcendent in His own heaven.[24]) The rabbis
developed this conception in their speculations and one of them
warns his hearers not to confuse the alabaster pavement before God's
throne with water. St. John in an apocalyptic vision sees God's throne
set on "a sea of glass like crystal." [25]) The Qur'ān in another place,
drawing on these rabbinic images,[26]) sets oSlomon's throne on a
floor of glass which the Queen of Sheba takes for a pool of water.

The Muslim commentators too link up the throne and the water with
creative activity by making the throne the first of all bodies to be
produced and the water the second, notions taken in part from Jewish
tradition. [27]) That the throne and water both preceded God's creating
is implied in 11.7/9 since the phrase is there attached to the divine
action as an antecedent circumstance.

"The heavens and the earth" taken together are the result of the
divine activity in all but one of this group, the one exception (13.2f)
using "the heavens" alone. The two conjoined in Scripture usually
signify the whole visible world or universe, for which ancient Hebrew
had no specific word. Muhammad, however, seems to have understood
the phrase in a literal sense, at least in the earliest text of this series.
There God's handiwork is carefully detailed in an expanded version of
the Biblical "heaven and earth": "He owns what is in the heavens,
and what is in the earth, *and what is between them both,* and what is
under the ground." The peculiar phrase with its dual form, "and what
is between them both" *(wamā bayna humā)* occurs fairly often in
the Qur'ān as applied to pairs of persons and things, but as conjoined
with "the heavens and the earth," it seems, according to Bell's dating,
to be a late phrase, proper to texts revised and added to late at Mecca
or in the first years at Medina. [28]) Approximate equivalents of the

24) Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Philadelphia.
The Westminster Press, 1961-67), II, 193.

25) Hermann Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
aus Talmud und Midrasch* (Munich: Beck, 1922-28), III, 798-99 on Ap 4.6.

26) 27.44. See Blachère, *Le Coran,* 320 n.

27) Bayḍāwī on 27.26 and 11.7/9, Zamakhsharī and Jalālayn on 11.7/9. See
Moore, *Judaism,* I, 526 for the Jewish version.

28) According to Blachère's ordering of the surahs and Bell's dates for the
units within each, the complementary phrase "and what is between them both"

amplified phrase, "the heavens and the earth and what is between them both," appear in the New Testament in Acts 4.24 and Ap 10.6 and are reproduced in a creed of Aphraates: "that man should believe in God, the Lord of all, who made heaven and earth and the seas and all that is in them." [29])

God's creating the world "in six days" is a detail found in seven places in the Qurʾān, six of them belonging to the present group of throne-texts. The seventh (50.38/37) is a slightly later text dating from after the final break with the Jews in December, 623. [30]) It omits any mention of God's throne or of His seating Himself upon it. Instead, it says that God created the heavens and the earth and what is between them both in six days "without any touch of fatigue." According to the commentator Bayḍāwī, the intent of this verse is to deny a statement which he and the other commentators attribute to the Jews, that is, that God, after working at the creation of the universe from Sunday to Friday, lay back on the throne to rest on Saturday. But the real aim of 50.38/37 would seem to be to correct an impression, attributed to the Jews but more probably left by the Qurʾān itself, that God had to rest after the work of creation. This conclusion would naturally have occurred to some of Muhammad's listeners because of the constant linking, in seven out of the eight texts of this group, of the clauses, "He created" and "then He sat down on the throne." After hearing the two short sentences juxtaposed on several occasions, the Jews or Muhammad's other adversaries at Medina could well have attributed to him the inference which 50.38/37 explicitly denies. In any case the combination, "He created"—"then He sat down on the throne," does not appear in texts of a later date in the Medinan period.

A glance at the chart a few paragraphs above will show that the greatest number of separate elements enter into combination in

---

occurs in conjunction with "the heavens and the earth" in the following passages (dealing with God's creating them or His sovereignty over them): 78.37 (sov.); 37.5 (sov.); 44.7/6 (sov.); *20.6/5 (sov.)*; 26.24/23 (sov.); 15.85 (creat.); 19.65/66 (sov.); 38.10/9 (sov.); 38.27/26 (creat.); 38.66 (sov.); 43.85 (sov.); 21.16 (creat.) : *25.59/60 (creat.)*; *32.4/3 (creat.)*; 30.8/7 (creat.); 46.3/2 (creat.); 50.38/37 (creat.); 5.17/20 (sov.). The three italicized references belong to the present series of throne-texts.

29) Aphraatis Demonstratio I, *De Fide,* n. 19 (P.S., I, 44, lines 13-15).
30) See Blachère, *Le Coran,* 177-78 n.

32.4/3f. Here are conjoined the phrase "and what is between them both," proper to the older passages, and the "command directed from heaven and reascending to God" of the later texts of this group. Here too the greatest amount of information about the latter detail emerges, suggesting almost inevitably the Lord's utterance in Deutero-Isaia 55.11: "My word ... goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish my will and achieve the end for which I sent it."

In 32.4/3f and in the subsequent texts of this group the gradual addition of images seems designed to furbish up phrases somewhat worn by use. A similar accumulation of figures or modifiers is fairly common in the Qurʾān. Examples are the later throne-texts of Group I already referred to and the early Meccan question, "When I am dead, shall I be brought back to life?" (19.66/67) This in later surahs becomes "When we are dead *and dust and bones*, shall we be revived?" (23.80/84) or "When we are *bones and fragments*, shall we be revived *as a new creation?*" (17.98/100) [31]

Two elements, therefore, previously unmet with enter into the make-up of 32.4/3f. The first is God's "directing the command" (*yudabbiru 'l-amr*). The expression occurs four times in the Qurʾān, always in a creation context. Three of these occurrences are in successive throne-texts in Surahs 32, 13, and 10 of this present group. The fourth is in 10.31/32.

> ...Who is it that makes the living go forth from the dead and makes the dead go forth from the living, and who *directs the command?* Then they will answer: God. Then (O Muhammad) say: Don't you fear Him?

The Muslim commentators explain the above passage as a description of the generation of plant or animal life from inanimate seed and the elaborating of inanimate seed from the living plant or animal. The Arabs regarded the seed as inanimate or "dead" because it was dried up or separated from the living body (plant or animal) that produced it. The Qurʾān describes all generation of life, including the final raising of mankind from the dust, as a creation in which mention of intermediate agents is suppressed, as in the Old Testament, in order to bring God's power and wisdom into stronger relief.

---

31) Other variations of the same initial question are 13.5; 17.49/52; 23.35/37; 27.67/69; 34.7; 36.78; 37.16 and 53/51; 50.3; 56.47; and 79.11.

A Medinan passage combines many of these Scriptural concepts into a succinct summary.

> 22.5f. Men, if you doubt the Resurrection—look! We created you from dust, then from seed... When We send water upon it (the earth), it... makes every beautiful (plant) pair grow. That is because God is creative power (*al-ḥaqq,* lit. "the truth") and makes the dead to live and is all-powerful.

The full text (22.5f) speaks of Adam's creation, then of each individual's "creation" from the seed of his parents, then of two forms of "second creation"—the annual renewal of plant life and the final raising of mankind. The close linking in 22.5f of God as truth, wisdom, and creative utterance (since *al-ḥaqq* connotes all three notions) with the giving of life in various "creations" exemplifies the idenfication made in the apocalyptic and sapiential writings of the late Hellenistic age between "truth," "wisdom," and "word." [32]) The rabbinic commentators exploited this identification and passed it on to Syriac Christian writers like Aphraates and St. Ephrem whose works influenced the environment in which the Qurᵓān originated.

The meaning of the *amr* which God "directs" may be illustrated by the juxtaposing of three texts, announced at rather close intervals to one another and dated by Bell within one or two years after the Hijrah (that is, between 622 and 624).

> 6.72f. It is He who created the heavens and the earth with the *ḥaqq* (creative word). On the day when He utters "Be" and it is, His *utterance* is the *ḥaqq* (creative word). His is the sovereignity on the day when the trumpet is blown.
>
> 16.38/40ff. They swore... "God will not raise to life him who dies." Yes (He will); He has promised to.... Our *utterance* (*qawl*) to a thing when We wish it (created) is merely to say to it, "Be" and it is.
>
> 36.78-82.... "Who will make bones live when they are decayed," Say: "He will make them live who created them the first time."... Can the Creator of the heavens and the earth not create the likes of them (men)?... His *command* (*amr*), when He wishes (the creation of) a thing, is merely to say to it, "Be" and it is.

In such contexts the Qurᵓanic *amr* strongly resembles the Arian "enunciated *word* and divine *command* which the Father used, as a

---

32) See Sir 24.3 and Prv 2.6; Kittel, TWNT, I 238, 19-22; 241, 14-16; and Xavier Léon-Dufour, *Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (London: Chapman, 1967), pp. 545-46.

workman a tool, to create the universe." [33]) To this quasi-instrumental command "Be" by which creatures come into existence the three preceding texts give three names: (1) the *ḥaqq*, the Sapiential "truth," "wisdom," or "word"; (2) God's *qawl* or "utterance," a general term corresponding to the action of the Creator in voicing (*qāla*) the command; and (3) God's *amr* or "command," a more definite type of "utterance" refering to its imperative character.

The noun *amr*, translated in the last of the three passages as "command," can also signify "affair." The ambiguity may be due to phrases used by the Syrian Christians of Muhammad's environment, since the Syriac *melā* also translates as "word," "command," and "affair." It occurs in a context resembling that of 36.82 in II Baruch, an apocryphon dating from the first century of the Christian era and incorporating many rabbinic phrases.

> Thou that hast made the earth, hear me; that hast fixed the firmament by the *word* and hast made firm the height of heaven by the spirit, that hast called from the beginning of the world that which did not yet exist, and they obey Thee [34]).

Like God's wisdom, personified as word in Sirach 24.3, His creative word also possesses a personal aspect in the Qurʾān from being associated with the angels and the spirit in Medinan texts employing similar vocabulares.

> 32.5/4. He directs the command ... it ascends to Him in a day whose length is a thousand years. ...
> 70.4. ... The angels and the spirit ascend to Him in a day whose length is fifty thousand years. ...

Wisdom, word, and spirit are terms closely associated in Jewish literature. Passages that involve all three, like 6.72f; 32.5/4; 70.4, and the less definite parallels in the other Medinan throne-texts, resemble the theosophical speculations of the rabbis based on the creation account of Genesis. The verses just cited and many similar texts echo confused snatches of rabbinic lore—like the following graphic lucubration of the Jewish commentators on God's master plan of creation.

---

33) Euthymii Zigabeni, *Panoplia Dogmatica,* titulus undecimus (P. G., 130, 383).
34) 2 Baruch 21.4 in R. H. Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,* II, 493.
35) Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar,* I, 974-75 (italics inserted). Other parallels are cited *ibid.,* III, 773-74.

> Six things preceded the *creation* of the world; some of them were (act-ually) created and some of them *ascended* into God's thoughts in order to be created (at some future time). The Torah and *the throne* were (actually) created (Ps 93.2).
>
> Two *thousand years* did these things together with the Torah precede the creation of the world, for it is said (Prv 8.30): 'I (*Wisdom*) was beside him, like a masterworker; and I was day by day his delight.' *One day of God is a thousand years* (Ps 90.4). (Therefore two days—day by day—are 2000 years [35]).

The *amr* theme is explicit in three of the four remaining throne-texts. God "directs" the creative command in 13.2 and in 10.3, and His command regulates the sun, moon, and stars in 7.54/52. This last passage also asserts the creation of the universe and the disposing of it "by His command" [36]) in a concluding and summarizing question. All these activities of the command recall the dynamic role so often attributed to God's word in the Old Testament. It there represents not only the act by which He created but it directs the whole universe once produced: the host of stars, the oceans, the storms, the winds, the snow, and the rains. [37]) In Wisdom and Deuteronomy the same divine word, like the manna in the desert, also gives life to those who believe in Him and keeps them safe. [38]) This last notion is not wholly absent from the Medinan throne-texts, which always look to the moral good of Muhammad's hearers: "years *you* count," "*you* see," "*you* will be convinced of the ultimate encounter with Him," "*you* ponder on His creation and on His word of command."

THE POSSESSOR OF THE THRONE—VARIOUS THEMES

Four texts dating from Medina and proclaimed during the first three years after the Hijrah introduce a new throne title—the "throne-possessor" (*dhu 'l-ᶜarsh*). The earlier clichés, "throne-Lord," "throne-bearers," and "throne-sitter," as has been seen, were each associated with a proper theme—monotheism, judgment or creation. But "throne-possessor" is a versatile epithet, applied in its four occurrences to no less than four different themes: monotheism, creation, judgment, and

---

36) That is, God creates all things and disposes them according to His will (Zamakhsharī and Bayḍāwī *ad loc*). "Exacting service" of the heavenly bodies is a late Meccan and early Medinan phrase always associated with creation.

37) Is 40.26; 44.27; Ps 107(106).25; 147.15-18. See Léon-Dufour, *Dictionary*, p. 586 *s.v.* "word of God."

38) Wis 16.26 and Dt 8.3 (LXX).

revelation. The surahs in which this cliché appears are all Meccan, two
of them (85.15 and 81.20) dating from the earliest period. Bell, how-
ever, regards the last two occurrences of the phrase (40.15 and 81.20)
as insertions made early in Medina and the second (85.15) as probably
dating from the same period. The "throne-possessor" epithet seems,
therefore, to have served to revise older texts and even to modify their
meaning. This is clear especially in its last occurrence (in 81.20) where
it is used in updating a Meccan teaching on the medium of revelation.
The four passages in approximate chronological order are as follows.

> 17.42/44. Say: If there were other gods besides Him, as they claim, they would
> surely have looked for means to (unseat) *the possessor of the throne.*
> 85.13ff. It is He who originates and restores, who is the forgiving, the devoted,
> *the possessor of the throne,* the glorious One.
> 40.15. Exalted in attributes, *the possessor of the throne,* He bestows the spirit
> from His command upon whatever one of His servants He pleases, that he
> may warn of the day of encounter.
> 81.20. It (the Qurʾān) is really the utterance of an honored messenger, endowed
> with power, influential with *the possessor of the throne,* obeyed there, faith-
> ful. Your companion is not possessed.

The first of these four texts uses the title, "the possessor of the
throne," of God in a simple argument for monotheism, a favored theme
of the later years at Mecca: other gods, if they existed as the polytheists
claim, would dispute God's possession of His throne, here a figure of
His supreme dominion. In content, though not in terminology, it
parallels another verse from about the same general period.

> 23.91/93. . . . There is no other deity along with Him. Otherwise each god would
> have gone off with what he created and some would have surpassed others.

In 85.13ff, a text dated by Bell from the first years at Medina, "the
possessor of the throne" appears in a list of divine attributes and in a
context in which God's creative activity is prominent. The verbs
yubdiʾ, "he accomplished a first time," "he originated," and *yuʿīd*,
"he accomplished a second time," "he restored," are also paired in
eight other passages in the Qurʾān. They refer to God's creating men
in the beginning and to His re-creating them by raising them to life
for the Final Judgment. [39]) The intent of the passage is to exalt God's
greatness as the all-powerful creator. "The possessor of the throne,"

---

39) The cliché occurs in 10.4; 10.34/35; 21.104; 27.64/65; 29.19/18; 30.11/10;
30.27/26; and 34.49/48.

as Baydāwī explains, means the creator of it, a notion introduced to confirm God's transcendence as creator even of His precosmic works, of which the throne is one. [40]) The commentator Zamakhsharī cites a variant by which the epithet "glorious" would refer to the throne instead of to God. This would reflect the rabbinic interest in the "throne of glory" based on Scriptural passages like 1 Sm 2.8; Is 22.23; Jer 14.21; 17.12; Sir 47.11; and Wis 9.10. The same expression is also found in several sayings of Christ recorded by the Synoptic writers. [41])

The third text (40.15) praises God as "the possessor of the throne" who gives His revelation to prophets that they may warn men of His coming Judgment. The passage refers to "the spirit from His command" as the medium of revelation. The notion is not an isolated one, for elsewhere too the Qurʾān describes the spirit as being "from" God's *amr* or "command," probably in the sense of "produced" or "directed" by His efficacious word. [42]) This would imply a theory of revelation mediated by a mysterious person whose identity is left obscure. The Qurʾanic "word of command" would thus resemble the personifications of the later books of the Old Testament: the revealing word paralleling Wisdom and God's spirit and the acting word executing His orders. [43]) Such notions point to a rabbinic influence, especially when seen in the Medinan setting in which these passages originated.

The Muslim commentators confirm this personified interpretation of the "word of command" in both its creative and revelatory functions. They interpret it as God's utterance, [44]) as the angel that brings revelation, [45]) and, taken together with "the spirit," as the cause of life that arises at God's creative command. [46])

Finally, in 81.20 the title "the possessor of the throne" appears in a revision made upon material dating from the earliest years of Mu-

40) See Kittel, TWNT, III, 163, 40-42.

41) *Ibid.*, III, 165, 4-17.

42) See 16.2; 17.85/87; and 42.52. Baydāwī interprets "the spirit from His command" in 16.2 as the spirit "by His command and because of it" and "the spirit is from my Lord's command" in 17.85/87 as the spirit is "a creature acquiring existence (directly) by God's creative command 'Be' independently of any (previously existing) matter."

43) See Léon-Dufour, *Dictionary,* p. 587 and Ps 119(118).89; 107(106).20; 147.15; Is 55.11; and Wis 18.14ff there cited.

44) Jalālayn on 40.15.

45) Baydāwī on 40.15.

46) Zamakhsharī on 40.15.

hammad's preaching. According to Bell the "honored messenger" of
the first part of the text originally referred to Muhammad himself. The
verse of the first Meccan period in its primitive form then read: "It
(the Qurʾān) is really the utterance of an honored messenger. Your
companion is not possessed by jinn." Later the "honored messenger"
was conceived to be the angel Gabriel. The change that produced the
present text was then made by inserting the intervening phrases,
including the title "the possessor of the throne," to indicate God. [47]

The revision must date from 625 or later, because in 2.97/91 Gabriel
appears for the first time as the bringer of revelation. [48] Muhammad
delivered most of Surah 2 in the second and third years after the
Hijrah and 2.97/91 is a later substitution for 98/92. This would there-
fore put 2.97/91 after the third year from the Hijrah or sometime
subsequent to May, 625. [49]

Unlike the previous three texts of this group which used "the
possessor of the throne" to illustrate the themes of monotheism, crea-
tion, and revelation-judgment, this passage is concerned only with the
Qurʾān itself as the revelation said to have been brought by Gabriel
from God to His human mouthpiece Muhammad. Gabriel, the medium
unnamed in the text but identified by the commentators, [50] is described
in the inserted material as highly regarded by "the possessor of the
throne," obeyed by the other angels in heaven, and faithful in
transmitting what God communicates to him.

The last two "throne-possessor" texts are roughly contemporaneous,
according to Bell's dating, with the "throne-sitter" (57.4 and 7.54/52)
and the "throne-Lord" texts (9.129/130 and 27.26) promulgated in
the third or fourth year of the Medinan period. But while the former
group depicts God only as the Creator possessing supreme dominion
and the latter God as unique, the many-faceted "throne-possessor" title
illustrates four different themes in its four occurrences. Its last use
is in a skilful modificaion of an older text that brings an earlier
affirmation into conformity with a doctrine elaborated to satisfy new
needs at Medina.

A final peculiarity of the "throne-possessor" group is its never being

47) Bell, *The Qurʾān*, p. 638.
48) Blachère, *Le Coran*, 754 n.
49) Bell, *The Qurʾān*, pp. 2 and 13.
50) Zamakhsharī and Bayḍāwī *ad loc.*

associated with the heavens. On the contrary, "heavens" occurs in two of the three texts of the "throne-bearer" group, in four of the six of the "throne-Lord" group, and in all seven passages of the "throne-sitter" group. Since the heavens and the throne are almost always found together in Scripture [51]) their dissociation in the four texts of the "throne-possessor" group may indicate an extra-Scriptural source.

The throne-texts all occur within a few years of one another around the time of Muhammad's departure from Mecca and his settling down at Medina. The throne themes thus enter his preaching at a time when he had growing contact with members of the Jewish settlements in Arabia. [52]) The Qurʾān seems to say that he tried, sometimes with success, to get them to confirm his teachings. [53]) In any case much of what he promulgated during these few years is impregnated with terms and allusions drawn from the *haggada*.

The application of the throne-texts to definite topics shows that Muhammad did not introduce them haphazardly but with premeditation and study. The detailed knowledge of rabbinic exegesis that seems to underlie their use would imply much more than a passing acquaintance with the doctrines of later Judaism. As it is unlikely that Muhammad himself had acquired such knowledge, he must have had the services of a mentor or mentors well acquainted with rabbinic tradition.

---

51) For example, Ez 1.26; Is 37.16; 40.22; 66.1; 1 Kgs 22.19; (2 Chr 18.18); Ps 11(10).4; 103(102).19; and Ap 5.13.

52) Blachère, *Le Coran*, 721 n. and 727.

53) 2.40-41/38; 2.62/59; 3.199/198; 3.113/109f. See also W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 195-204.

AN ENIGMATIC FUNCTION
OF THE *FLAMEN DIALIS* (Ovid, *Fast.*, 2.282)
AND THE AUGUSTAN REFORM

BY

A. W. J. HOLLEMAN
's-Gravenhage, Holland

Ovid's treatment of the Lupercalia — *Fast.* 2.267-452 — is certainly our primary source on this much debated Roman festival, which with regard to its origin, its meaning, and its ritual details, is still far from being clear. Lastly K. W. Welwei has discussed the many controversial points of the festival, particularly in view of its famous celebration in the year 44 B.C. [1]). However, some essential features of it by all authors on the subject so far have been, I fear, overlooked. As I have already treated of Ovid's Lupercalia as a whole elsewhere [2]), I shall here tackle just one detail of the description, which I think to be the best starting-point for renewing the discussion, namely the vexed line 282. In the most recent edition of *Fastorum Liber II*, by H. Le Bonniec, this utterly enigmatic line reads thus: [3])

> *flamen ad haec prisco more Dialis erat.*

The commentary *ad loc.* resumes the difficulties involved: "Seul témoignage sur la participation du flamine de Jupiter aux rites des *Lupercales*. Ce texte, peu satisfaisant (*ad haec* et *erat* ont été suspectés), fait difficulté du point de vue religieux: le *flamen Dialis* n'avait pas le droit de toucher, ni de nommer les chèvres et les chiens (Plutarque, *Quest. rom.*, 111; Aulu-Gelle, X, 15, 12); or ces animaux étaient sacrifiés lors de la fête. K. Latte se demande s'il ne s'agirait

---

1) *Das Angebot des Diadems an Caesar und das Luperkalienproblem*, Historia, 16, 1967, 44-69. Cf. Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act 1.

2) In using in the present paper the word "elsewhere" in this context I am referring to *Ovidius en de Lupercalia*, *Hermeneus*, 43, 1971-72, 5/6, 242-247; *Ovid and the Lupercalia*, Historia, 21, 1972, 000-000; *Femina Virtus*, forthcoming in the *Acta Conv. Int. Ovid.* of 1972 (Bucarest).

3) In the coll. "Erasme", Paris, 1969.

pas d'une innovation datant de la restauration augustéenne des *Luper-cales* (*Röm. Religionsgesch.*, 84, n. 3). Mais il est peu concevable qu'Auguste ait modifié les fonctions du prêtre le plus vénérable et le plus fossilisé de la religion romaine. De plus, *erat* condamne cette hypothèse; quant à *erit,* moins bien attesté, on ne voit pas comment l'expliquer. Nous comprenons que le rituel antique (*prisco more*) comportait la participation du *Dialis,* mais que cette coutume était tombée en désuétude: n'oublions pas que le *flamonium* de Jupiter était sans titulaire depuis 75 ans quand il fut restauré par Auguste. De toute façon, la violation des "tabous" n'a pas encore été expliquée d'une manière satisfaisante". Quite amazing is the sentence "Nous comprenons . . .", for so far, as is admitted at the end of the comment, we do not understand at all the presence of the *flamen Dialis* at the festival, whether at the original or at the restored one. J. Bayet even says: "la vue même d'un chien était interdite à ce prêtre" [4]). Le Bonniec, therefore, far from elucidating the reading *erat,* only stresses the enigmatic nature of the line. That may explain why at least one later copist suppressed the lines 281-82 altogether, probably for containing a ritual impossibility [5]). Yet, as all modern editors do I take it that Ovid did write the lines, and this not only because they round off the passage (271-82) in a quite satisfactory manner and, therefore, cannot be missed.

If Ovid was right in noting the presence of the *flamen Dialis* — and it is unthinkable that in doing so he simply told an obvious lie —, this presence must have been a ritual blunder of the emperor. This is what Le Bonniec refuses to believe, but then he seems to forget that Augustus indeed made some alterations in the status of the *flamen Dialis,* and rather drastic ones at that. When the same thing was done in the reign of Tiberius, Tacitus has it that this was done precisely *sicut Augustus quaedam ex horrida illa antiquitate ad praesentem usum flexisset* (*Ann.* 4. 16). Evidently Augustus would not have succeeded at all in appointing a *flamen Dialis* in 12 (or 11) B.C. otherwise than "durch Milderung der auf dem Amte lastenden sakralen Verpflichtungen" (Altheim [6]). So, considering Tacitus' words *ad praesentem*

---

4) J. Bayet, *Histoire politique et psychologique de la religion romaine,* Paris, [2] 1969, 79.
5) Still both lines are added by a later hand at the foot of the page (ms. U).
6) F. Altheim, *Röm. Religionsgeschichte,* Baden-Baden, II, 1953, 198.

usum, Latte may be quite right in supposing that the vexed line 282 has to do with Augustus' restoration and renovating of the Lupercalia. Suetonius (*Aug.* 31) tells us that the emperor was anxious to make the festival more decent than it had been before: *uetuit currere imberbes.* Franz Bömer says cautiously: „Die Restauration legt die Möglichkeit nahe, dass der Kaiser Neuerungen eingeführt hat" [7]). As I pointed out elsewhere, the first texts about the *Luperci* going about in a loin-cloth of goat-skin date only from the times of Augustus and were written in view of the restored festival: Justin 43.1.7 (... *quo habitu nunc* ...), and Dionysius Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 1.80.1 (ὡς καὶ νῦν ἔτι) [8]). Earlier writers only know of *Luperci nudi,* even Virgil (*Aen.* 8.663) and Livy (1.5.2) [9]). It is more than likely, therefore, that the loincloth of the *Luperci* was one of Augustus' measures in order to make the festival more decent, a rather appropriate one [10]), even though it was not in accordance with the *priscus mos*: cf. Cicero's indignation at Antony's performance as a *Lupercus nudus* in 44 B.C. (*Phil.* 2.34 and 43; 3.5; 13.15). Cicero's remarkable description *nudus-unctus-ebrius* rather suggests that the nudity was conditioned by the obligation of being anointed as a well-known potent charm, which may account also for the drinking. That this nudity stopped short of the sexual parts is, in this context, simply incredible. Plutarch's source Acilius (*Rom.* 21.17) interpreted about 150 B.C. the unction as "sweat" but the nudity evidently as total. Lactantius (*Diu. Inst.* 1.21.45) still knew of this nudity going with unction: *qui nudi uncti... currunt.* Ovid's explanations of the nudity of the *Luperci* as the ministers of the *deus nudus* (287) make it perfectly clear that the poet is just poking fun at Augustus' actions of decency, among other things. Indeed, it

---

7) F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso, Die Fasten,* II, 1958, on 267.

8) For explanation of Dionysius' words see my art. in *Historia 1972.*

9) Some commentators are apt to take Virgil's words *pellibus in morem cincti* (*Aen.* 8.282) as referring to the *Luperci.* This is improbable in the extreme. Virgil is speaking of *sacerdotes* in general (281) of primitive Italy. So the description may well present the general image of those times, having nothing to do with a loin-cloth, let alone of goat-skin. Moreover, the passage concerns the cult of Hercules, which excludes the *Luperci.* In fact, in Ovid's ludicrous story (305-58) Faunus gets his rough beating precisely at the hands of Hercules.

10) For the use of a goat or goat-skin for fertility ends cf. Iuno Caprotina and the array of Iuno Sospeis at Lanuvium, and see Frazer's note on *Fast.* 2.267, esp. p. 341-53. Also the term *amiculum Iunonis* (Festus 76 L) for the "fertilizng" thongs of the *Luperci* may have contributed to the measure.

is evident that Ovid was always ready to annoy the emperor by tackling, unobtrusively, many an imperial regulation which was said to mean bringing back the *priscus mos* such as was favourite with Augustus: *Legibus nouis me auctore latis multa exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro saeculo reduxi (Res Gestae* 8). Precisely that form of anti-Augustanism — *Prisca iuuent alios!* — may be seen as the real ground for Ovid's relegation. As lastly Lidia Winniczuk has pointed out, after being relegated Ovid remained quite the same character: "Ovid, in Rom und im Exil — immer derselbe" [11]). The *Fasti* is certainly no proof of a conversion. *Fast.* 2.7-9, *Idem sacra cano* ... *Haec mea militia est,* indeed, is too closely connected with the defying *militia Veneris* of his earlier days, *cum lusit numeris prima iuuenta suis* (line 6), to be ignored as a pun, a hint for the reader.

We may take it, therefore, that *Fast.* 2.282 Ovid does not fail to intimate, and in quite innocent looking language at that, that the emperor in his mania for the *priscus mos* had blundered. After all, we realize that this mania was to conceal, or rather to prepare, a very un-Roman conceit, namely that of the divine emperor. That is why Bayet speaks of "L'inflexion augustéenne de la religion romaine", and characterizes Augustus with regard to his religious intentions thus: "La persuasion d'une prédestination divine fut précoce" [12]). Augustus did not proceed with his religious and ritual revival without at the same time making innovations and taking measures to accustom the Romans to the imperial cult. How well he has succeeded in this policy is proved in the extreme by the *Acta Fratrum Arualium,* of that Brotherhood which Augustus revived towards 21 B. C. Altheim, in speaking of this "revival", still quotes Wissowa, i.a.: „ ... dass die bei diesen Akten angerufenen Gottheiten ganz andere sind als die, die bei dem alten Jahresfeste und bei den Sühneopfern in Wirksamkeit treten; sogar *Dea Dia,* der doch der ganze Dienst der Priesterschaft gewidmet ist, erscheint nur in der allerersten Zeit — hinter der kapitolinischen Trias — in den Neujahrsvota; nachher vollziehen sich diese Loyalitätsakte durchweg, ohne dass der eigentlichen Inhaberin des Kultes auch nur mit einem Worte gedacht würde" [13]). As I suggested elsewhere, also the restoration of the Lupercalia may

---

11) In *Neue Literatur,* 23, 1972, 6, 92-96.
12) *Op. cit.,* 171. He mitigates the conceit to "surhumanisation".
13) *Röm. Religionsgeschichte,* Berlin, II,[2] 1956, 99-100.

be seen as one of those measures, being probably related to the Julian
Romulus-ideology. But it had to be done in a more cautious way than
on the occasion of the celebration of it in the year 44 B.C. — which
was probably meant as a yearly coronation of the *dictator perpetuus*
by his newly created *Luperci Iulii* but only led up to the downfall of
Caesar, and to the abolition of those *Luperci* (Cic., *Phil.* 13.15) and
of the festival itself (Suet., *ib.* [14]). This time it had to be done in a
really Augustan way, which fully explains the actions of decency ac-
companying the restoration of the festival. In this context fits the
presence of the *flamen Dialis,* whose status on the occasion of the ap-
pointment in the year 12 (or 11) B.C. evidently was liberated from
some taboos of old so as to adapt this official to new tasks, as is clearly
suggested by Tacitus' words as cited above. That must be why Ovid
mentions only his presence and does not specify any action of his at
the restored festival (cf. Latte, *loc. cit.*). It is clear that the priest was
only put in charge of it, probably to heighten its respect as compared
to the carnivalesque business the Lupercalia had been previously.
While it was certainly in Caesar's line to gamble on the very popularity
of the festival, Augustus was anxious to heighten it to the dignity of
the imperial cult as it was on its way: the presence of the *flamen Dialis*
could not fail to connect the Lupercalia with the highest sphere of
religious and monarchical awe, as is made perfectly clear by Livy 1.20.2:
(*Numa*) *ne sacra regiae uicis desererentur, flaminem Ioui adsiduum
sacerdotem creauit insignique eum ueste et curuli regia sella ador-
nauit* — which explains his cooperation with the *rex* (*sacrorum*):
Fast. 2.21. *Prisco more* then means: "by Augustan conceit".

  If I am right in this series of, I think, coherent suggestions, the line
under discussion may be constituted thus:

<div style="text-align:center">

flamen ad haec prisco more Dialis erit.

</div>

The sarcasm contained in it might be compared with Cicero's well-
known comment on the calendar reform of Caesar. Plutarch (*Caes.*

---

  14) Dumézil and Alföldi are apt to take the Lupercalia as originally being a
coronation ceremony. Dumézil is certainly right in calling the creation of the
Luperci Iulii "première ébauche du culte impérial" (*La religion romaine archaique,*
Paris, 1966, 343). Cf. Lactantius, *Diu. Inst.* 1.21.45, speaking of the *Luperci*
evidently: *qui nudi uncti coronati aut personati aut luto obliti currunt.* But, of
course, this was written about 300 A.D. My suggestion is now supported by
V. Buchheit, *Der Anspruch des Dichters,* Darmstadt, 1972, 97.

59) tells us that the orator, in view of this reform, φήσαντός τινος αὔριον ἐπιτέλλειν Λύραν, "Ναι, εἶπεν, ἐκ διατάγματος." The expressions ἐκ διατάγματος and *prisco more* are meant then to characterize resp. Caesar and Augustus while the future indications αὔριον and *erit* just stress the autocratic nature of the regulations involved. But the concurrence lies primarily in the unobtrusive intimation, both times, that the Big Man had blundered. In the case of Cicero's words this seems to be generally unknown or ignored, perhaps already by Plutarch [15]). Carcopino, of course, does not fail to note: "En vérité, Cicéron s'est couvert de ridicule lorsqu'il a raillé le "second Méton", plaisanté lourdement sur les constellations qui ne se lèveraient plus qu'à l'appel de ses ordonnances" [16]). Cicero, however, knew better than Carcopino. For why should he have reacted, in contradistinction to what Carcopino generalizing says, exactly to the mentioning of the constellation Lyra? The answer may come from Frazer, who based his statement on no one less than the astronomer Ideler. *Ad Fast.* 1.315 commenting on the rising of the Lyra Frazer is quite convinced that Ovid's dating came from the Julian calendar, and "that Caesar, or rather the astronomer on whom he depended, erred egregiously in his calculation; for the apparent rising of the constellation at morning fell two months earlier on the fifth of November, and the true rising still earlier". To make things worse, also this time the blunder was of a religious nature, and made by, or at least with the consent of, the *Pontifex Maximus* himself [17]). So far, the sarcastic implications of both texts have, I fear, escaped observation. In the case of Ovid's line 282, the high degree of uncertainty in the mss. is only too natural: Roman copists who knew their theology and its rites must have been at their wit's end. Towards 496 A.D. the festival had turned, again, into a carnivalesque business ending in a very lascivious atmosphere and having little to do with religion. That is why it was suppressed by

---

15) Plutarch's text is not all too clear. Rex Warner (*Plutarch, Fall of the Roman Republic,* Penguin-Classics, p. 266) translates: "implying that even the risings of the stars was something that people had to accept under compulsion". The Greek text, however, has only καὶ τοῦτο, which may denote only the rising of the Lyra as mentioned by Cicero's partner in the conversation, which evidently took place January 4th.

16) J. Carcopino, *César* (coll. Glotz,[3] 1943, 1032; ed. 1965, 424.

17) As to the many "astronomical blunders" of Ovid, therefore, more caution does not seem to be out of place!

Pope Gelasius I[18]), no emperor at Rome then being in charge.

The year 7 B.C. is the *terminus ante quem* of the Augustan restoration of the Lupercalia, for in this year the *Roman Antiquities* of Dionysius Hal. — or at least the first Books of it — were published[19]). As I hope to have made clear, it is not likely that Augustus restored the festival quite apart from the fortunate availability of a *flamen Dialis*. So the vexed line 282 may well contain the *terminus post quem* (12 B.C.). This calculation brings the restoration of the Lupercalia close to the vowing and the dedication of the so-called Ara Pacis and the re-organization of the Compitalia-cult. For obvious reasons I am rather happy with this coincidence: it confirms my suggestion that the restoration of the festival also was one of the measures of the emperor to prepare the Roman mind for accepting the emperor-cult. If this be the case, it implies undeniably that the famous celebration of the Lupercalia of the year 44 had already to do with that: that is to say: with the introduction of a Divine Kingship. Reason why the festival, in spite of its popularity, was immediately abolished. That exactly a month later Caesar fell a victim to it is a well-known fact. However, where Caesar failed Augustus knew how to succeed. Ovid, I think, was entirely aware of this quality of his emperor, and he had the heart, time and again, to expose it in his own ambiguous way[20]). Small wonder that Augustus was anxious to relegate him to limbo.

Again, it may be clear that Ovid's *Fasti* is a work of great value for the study of Roman religion, indeed, but — what is more — that it contains many an information on what was going on in the actual history of his own days, in a manner such as has not been suspected so far.

---

18) Some modern authors on the subject give the year 494. Obviously this is done on the authority of Frazer, whose commentary, vol. II, p. 328 indeed has the year 494. On p. 331, but unfortunately in a footnote only, the same book has the right year 496. On p. 332 in the same book of Sir James the date of the Lup. is stated to be "January 15th". Which may denote that we all are liable to making mistakes, and overlooking them.

19) As Justin's Book 41 ends with the surrender of the Roman standards by the Parthians (20 B.C.), and Book 43 ends with Augustus' subjugation of Spain (19 B.C.), we can only say that this part of the work must have been written after 19 B.C.

20) Cf. my articles on the subject in *Latomus,* 28, 1969, 42-60, and in *Historia,* 20, 1971, 458-66.

WORSHIP IN IBO TRADITIONAL RELIGION

BY

EDMUND ILOGU

Nsukka, Nigeria

The Ibo who number about 9½ million people occupy parts of South Eastern Nigeria in the newly created East Central State and parts of the Mid-Western and the Rivers States of the Federation of Nigeria.

The following account was taken from Ihiala and is typical of most areas of the Northern Ibo region. Cross checking from towns like Agukwu Nri, Enugu Ukwu and Onitsha indicate close similarities. With some modifications a fair picture of private and public worship systems of Iboland can be drawn.

Private Worship. This is divided into two parts: routine and occasional. Routine private worship includes the daily offerings made by the head of a household to the ancestors at the Ndebunze (ancestral spirit) shrine in kola-nuts, lines of white chalk and prayers for protection, prosperity and wellbeing of the family while holding up the Ọfọ stick. The "Igwọ Ọfọ" worship is also a routine done once a year as a prayer privately offered by the head of a household when the Ọfọ stick is ceremoniously cleansed with blood of a chicken sacrificed to the ancestors and wipped off with akọrọ (selagenella) leaves. Occasional private worship is done when ordered by a diviner as a result of his being consulted by the individual concerned. There are also cases of a diviner meeting an unknown person in the street to whom he gives a message received from the gods requiring the unknown stranger to offer some sacrifices. This is however very rare. When the diviner prescribes what is to be done, the individual concerned goes to the priest of the special deity and offers the prescribed sacrifice either of chicken, or eggs and kola-nuts with alligator pepper or goat palm wine and chalk as the case may be. The special intention of such acts of private worship performed for the individual by the priest is usually one or more of such needs as:

(1) To seek favour from ancestral spirits.

(2) To seek protection from evil spirits like those of witches or evil minded persons.

(3) To seek healing from an illness or cleansing from defilement in eating forbidden animal or entry into "bad bush" or contact with menstruating woman.

(4) To propitiate neglected ancestral spirits or angered gods.

(5) To seek the gift of children.

Public Worhip. This is also divided into two kinds: the family or extended family worship and the clan-tribe worship. Both kinds involve annual or biannual celebrations bringing people together to enact aspects of the history of the family, clan or tribe; but more so to celebrate aspects of natural and agricultural manifestations of the local and family gods. This list is taken from Ihiala.

(1) Ime Obi umuaka (the spirit of children). A white chicken is slaughtered by the head of an extended family at the special shrine to ensure increased fertility and wellbeing of children. Prayers are offered to the ancestral spirits and to Ala goddess while the chicken sacrificed is used in a communal meal followed by ritual dancing around the Ala shrine of the clan or extended family by young maidens alone.

(2) Ime chi la agu (the propitiation of the spirit of relationship and kindreds). Married daughters take eight pieces of yams, palm wine, fish and sometimes cloth to their mother. Their mother's husband propitiates the woman's chi with the gifts from the daughter and blesses the daughters praying for their wellbeing.

A young wife who has not had a married daughter, provides the sacrificial materials for herself and calls her husband to protitiate her chi for her and her young children. Part of the tribute and sacrificial materials from the women of a clan are given to the oldest woman member who keeps the shrine of Ara la Oma (the collective spirit of all the extended family).

(3) Ida ji (the collection of yams). Young unmarried women of the village parade with songs to the homes of all the Ozọ titled men collecting yams from them in the month of May when yams are so scarce and collecting corns and peers from elderly

women and young men. These are heaped in the home of the
leader of these young ladies where after they had been offered
to the Ala goddess they become food for the young ladies who
must stay together in their leader's home for seven native
weeks communally feeding on such yams, corns and pears as
they have collected. This is believed to ensure a plenty harvest,
communal wellbeing and harmony for the village for the forth-
coming harvest year.

(4) Ite Nsi: This is the propitiation of Ife-jioku, the god of farming
before the new yam is eaten. A cock offered by the wife is sacri-
ficed at the shrine of Ife-jioku inside the barn and parts of
the animal are distributed to various members of the extended
family as prescribed by custom. All the young brothers must
take tribute (Ife-nru) of eight yams, eight pieces of fire wood
and a leg of the sacrificed chicken to their oldest brother who
in turn takes the same kind of tribute to the oldest head of the
extended family. The new yam is eaten seven native weeks
after this public worship.

(5) Iro Muo: This is the biggest of the celebrations. It takes place
during the period of agricultural plenty. It literally means
"the feast of pleasing the gods". It is a kind of harvest thanks-
giving.

All sons and married daughters take tribute (ife-nru) of eight yams,
and kola-nuts to the oldest surviving son of their father who offers
them in sacrifice to the Ndebunze, the ancestral spirit, together with
the goat which must be provided by the oldest married daughter of
the household. Communal eating follows culminating in ritual dance
at the village square after the appropriate sacrifices have been offered
at the shrine of the clan god by the clan priest. Both the young and the
middle aged people take part in this ritual dance. The prayers offered
at the shrine of the household ancestral spirit and the one said at the
public square to the clan god contain thanksgiving to Chukwu, Ala
and Ndebunze for protection, for good harvest and increase in children,
deliverance from epidemics like small-pox and from abominations of
any kind for which the wrath of both gods and ancestral spirits would
have punished "the land".

Occasional public worship includes the sacrifice of atonement. After

epidemics of any kind the diviners are consulted to know what had "spoiled the land". If no particular individual is accused as being responsible, all the village then becomes guilty. Sacrificial animal, sheep and sometimes a yam or a male goat is bought with money collected from adult men. The priest of the clan or a priest of a particular god mentioned by the diviner will tie the four legs of the animal, drag it about around some public places and then sacrifice the animal at the shrine of the clan earth goddess. Its meat is not eaten but rather it is given to the Osu people dedicated to the Ala goddess. Another example of occasional public worship is the ichu-aro (driving away of an old year). Sacrifice of chickens brought by each family head as well as the breaking of old baskets and pots at the Aho shrine feature in this act of worship together with the saying of incantations and prayers. This in some places is an annual worship while in some places it is ordered occasionally by the diviner after plagues, floods and other calamities. The climax of public worship is the annual propitiation of clan gods. Each clan has its own public shrine dedicated to its own clan protector. I watched the annual propitiation of the clan protector. I watched the annual propitiation of the clan god of Umunwajiobi called Ogwugwu at Ihiala. This was in March before planting of yams.The men collected money to buy goats and the women (wives of the men and not their sisters as in Iro Muo) buy hens. The animals are sacrificed at the shrine of Ogwugwu whose cultus symbols contain a big earth human seated figure with two young children by each side, an earthen pot in front, and outside the hut sheltering the figures stands the ogirisi tree in a central position. The eyes of the five figures are particularly open and awe inspiring. The blood of the animals is poured into the earthen pot, the plumes of the chickens are heaped inside the hut by the side of the pot, kola-nuts are broken and placed into the hands of the five human forms; lines of chalk are drawn according to the number of the subfamilies of Umunwajiobi. At this juncture the Okpara begins the first of his prayers [1]) after which the women start cooking the meat of the sacrificed animals and some yams. A big feast is prepared. First of

---

[1]) The "liturgical' long prayer of the ceremony is said at this moment of breaking of kola-nuts and the slaughtering of the animals. There is no set form, the length and expression depend on the oratorical ability of the elder-priest (Okpara) with support from the Ọzọ titled men and elders.

all, that is before people start to eat pieces of appropriate parts of the animals together, lumps of foofoo are thrown into the hut with the prayer that the Ogwugwu god should be pleased to share in the meal offerings of his children and bless them [2]). All eat together out of the meal so prepared. Women bring white chalk and akoro to decorate the hut of the shrine and ritual dance is staged. The clan ballad singer praises the ancestors of the clan, tells the story of the brave deeds of past leaders of the clan and all present respond with warm glee that as their forebears had triumphed in the past so will the present and future generations triumph, Ogwugwu being their god and protector. Children are then particularly enjoined to remember that Ogwugwu, the ancestors and their spirits do frown at deeds which foul human relations. This worship is regarded as an annual covenant making between the members of the clan both the living and the dead with their clan god Ogwugwu. The final act is the pouring of win libation by the Okpara, the clan head and then by all the Ozo titled men while the women take the chalk from the shrine and mark their breasts and abdomens. This done, people begin to go home singing joyously as they go.

Priests, medicinemen (dibia) and oracles: The picture of Ibo worship is incomplete without some discussion about priests, dibias and oracles. The Ibo believe in the priesthood of all heads of households, extended families and clans. Also all Ozo titled men are priests in so far as they offer sacrifices and perform ritual functions including praying to Chukwu and to the ancestors. In addition to this there is a class of special priests made up of two categories. One class comes from the Osu (people taken captives and dedicated to special gods). One of them is always chosen to be the special priest of that god and must live near that god's shrine [3]). The other class of priests is made up

---

2) Text of such prayer could go like this: Ogwugwu rie nri, Nnaha rienu nri, Obu ihe umu gi wetara; Ekwena ayi nwua, ekwena ayi fu. Eha! (response from the people).

Ogwugwu eat food, Ancestors eat food! It is the offering from your children; Keep us, not to die, keep us no to perish. So let it be (response from the people).

3) At Ihiala the priests from Osu Ulasi Ogboro have now refused to be so styled. They do not continue to perform their priestly functions as described here. The Government of Eastern Nigeria had passed a law that these outcasts should be declared "free men".

of men who become priests through "appointment" by ancestral spirits. Such men behave queerly and are noticed by those already priests who take them in and train them. Such people do sometimes combine three functions: those of medicine men with the knowledge of healing herbs, secondly divination and thirdly sacrificing priests. They also have power at times to exorcise, prepare medicine for warding off evil, for protecting from harm like car accidents and for bringing good fortune in trade or hunting. Such "medicines" are what people sometimes call charms. In each village a priest is known to be specially related to one or more gods. When a diviner prescribes sacrifice he also names the proper priest that should perform the function. In this way priests exercise leadership among the people. In some circumstances there is a class of men greatly gifted in the knowledge of the use of herbs to cure various diseases. These men are commonly known as "dibia" and not priests. They cannot divine but work hand in hand with divinerpriests. In all cases no cure is carried out entirely by the dibia without consulting diviners. Divination in the case of illness nearly always leads to finding out what spirit had been wronged and what human relationship had been strained. Sacrifice and propitiation which in effect are occasional private acts of worship accompany whatever herbal medicine is given to ensure proper cure.

Divination in a simple process is done by any diviner-priests. Major issues are referred to the principal oracles of Iboland of which there are four [4]):

(1) The Chukwu Oracle Ibinukpabi of Arochukwu popularly known as the long juju.
(2) The Agbala of Awka.
(3) The Igwe-ka-Ala of Umunoha near Owerri.
(4) The Onyili Ora near Agu-Ukwu, Nri.

Each of these has its highly organised system of priests and attendants and agents. In the absence of a widely organised political central

---

4) S. R. Smith in his study of the Ibo people notes four conditions requisite for the growth of these oracles: Quiet remote place. (2) Some natural features like rocks, caves and steep valleys with running water or groves and dense bush to inspire awe. (3) A system of travelling agents to invite clients to the oracles. (4) An easy and secret method for the disposal of victims "eaten" by the gods of the oracle. See K. O. Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta,* Oxford University Press, London, 1956.

authority in Iboland the oaracles had united people from all corners, as people in search of wellbeing and "knowledge of the truth" from the gods go to consult them.

Holy Days: These are days which are holy to gods and to most adults in Iboland. There are four market days running in two parallels thereby forming one complete native week of eight days made up as follows: Eke Nta, Orie Nta, Afo Nta, Nkwo Nta, Eke Ukwu, Orie Uk-wu, Afo Ukwu and Nkwo Ukwu (Nta means small, Ukwu means great). Certain gods must be worshipped on their holy days, for example Afo and Eke are holy days to Anyanwu and Agbala at Awka. Orie is a holy day to Ogwugwu, clan god of the Umunwajiobi "family" of Ihiala. Most Ozọ titled men keep Eke Ukwu as a holy day on which day they must not eat any food cooked with palm oil nor come into contact with women nor go to any farm work. The Ozọ titled man must "meditate" on such a day and keep "quiet time" with the ancestors and offer special prayers to them for the wellbeing of his "family". Some young-men who have not taken any title could, through divination, be told which day they should observe as their holy day. Priests dedicated to special gods observe as their own holy day the day that is holy to their gods. At Ihiala Afo Ukwu is the holy day to Ulasi Ogboro when all individual sacrifices ordered by a diviner are offered. Therefore the priest on that day observes the taboos of the god including staying away from farm work so as to attend to the supplicants who might come to the shrine of Ulasi Ogboro.

Conclusion

The question can now be raised, what meaning of the sacred do the various acts of worship we have been describing give and what ex-perience about the being and function of the Object of worship could be suggested? Another question that can be asked is how far do the experiences gained through these various acts of worship give the worshippers a personal apprehension of the living God. A simplistic answer to the last question is to say — "well of course Ibo traditional religion with all its belief and practice which includes aspects of worship described in this essay is primitive religion which mixes religion with magic [5]) and can therefore lead no one to a vision of the sacred and

5) Note the distinction which writers have made between religion and magic since the days of Sir James Frazer whose book "The Golden Bough" first

thence towards a personal apprehension of the living God". With
this facile attitude of seeing Ibo traditional worship and religious
practices as more by magic stimulating the desire of the worshipper to
coerce the deity by placing him under the worshipper's control and
then to get the deity to do the worshipper's desire rather than as pure
and simple religion in which the worshipper submits himself to the will
of the deity in ready obedience to that will, we will miss the significance
of worship to an Iboman. Surely there is not fine demarcation in the
thought of a simple village Iboman between the phenomenal and the
noumenal, between the causal and the caused, between things casual
and things prognostic, yet it is through these practical acts of private
as well as by public worship that he tries to acknowledge God as the
"known" and yet the "unknown", the "mysterium tremendum" that is
still "attractive" to make him want to offer the early morning sacrifice of
kola-nuts the next day. To put in another way our answer to the second
of our two questions is that whether in Ibo traditional worship or in
Jewish religion of the Old Testament or even in pre-Reformation as
well as in post-Reformation Christian religion man has often wor-
shipped God with a mixture of the "magical" as well as the "religious".
The "magical" is that element of the selfish (if we mean that man's
seeking for help towards his own wellbeing can be described as the
selfish) struggling with God, that wrestling with the divine until He
blesses the human. The Iboman would say in a proverb "ka anachu
aja ka ikpe nama ndi Mọ" (let us go on sacrificing to the gods and
let the guilt be that of the spirits) meaning that the sacrifices do not
always bring the desired good and yet such sacrifice is not discontinued.
It is not discontinued because human needs will always remain and
man no matter the sophistication of his technology will find himself
not all sufficient, for if he were he would not die! It is therefore by
man's persistence to continue to worship, to offer sacrifice, to wrestle
with his God no matter however imperfectly known that faith is forged
and with such faith that even the Iboman in his traditional religious wor-
ship comes to that level of the knowledge and the personal apprehension
of the living God by which he continues to offer his daily sacrifice to
the known and yet the unknown Anyanwu n'Eze Enu (the sun and

---

appeared in 1890. 'Religion represents a submissive mind, magic an overbearing,
self asserting attitude'. Nathan Söderblom as quoted by Stephen Neill in *Christian
Faith and Other Faiths*. Oxford Paperbacks, 1970, p. 129.

the King of the Sky). There is always the element of the "magical" in all forms of the human worship of the Divine, be it Christian, Islamic or African traditional form, the difference is only a matter of degree. To say this does not imply that we do not recognise the difference between Christian worship and Ibo traditional religious worship. No one can know God unless God himself reveals and Jesus Christ is the full revelation of God. That fact alone makes all the difference between Christian and non-Christian worship. Having said that, we go ahead and restate what has been said earlier on, that in the continued struggle of the Iboman in his traditional religion to offer his daily sacrifices or his yearly worship at the shrine of Ifejioku (the god of yams) lies the nursery bed through which the greater knowledge of God in Jesus Christ has germinated to grow to a new possibility. To recognise this fact is not to degenerate into the hedious and dreaded syncretism that in some parts of the world has led to the adulterated Christianity that has done more harm than good in the history of man's upward movement towards seeing God through the glass less darkly. On the other hand not to recognise the fact that faith already built in human culture through the traditional worship of the Ibo or any other group of people leads to personal apprehension of God, no matter however feeble, is to deny that God has never left himself without witnesses. But woe betide that undiscerning Iboman who would prefer to stick to that which is in part, now that that, which is perfect has come [6]!

We can now take the first question which we have posed in this conclusion that is the meaning of the sacred the Ibo have learnt through their traditional worship as well as the experience they have about the being and the function of the Object of their worship. In other words what is the theology the Ibo people have developed to which they give expression through the worship patterns described in this essay. Needless stating that the Ibo did not evolve systematised theology nor philosophy. Insights are rather developed into the nature of Reality, and such other questions discussed by theology and philosophy are expressed through proverbs and practice rather than through dogma and doctrine. Ultimate Reality is to the Iboman "high and lifted up" [7]) and so is to be

---

6) See Umunna, V. N., "Nigerian Paganism as a Preparation for the Gospel" in *East and West Review*, no. 5, London, 1939, pp. 139-145.

7) Isaiah chapter 6, verse 1.

approached through the gods and godlings and ancestral spirits. The mediums may differ from one culture to the other but the pattern seems to remain the same namely that one cannot really approach the Sacred that is "mysterium tremendum" face to face and discern his functions so clearly and unequivocally and still remain human? Ibo worship has often been offered to the earth deity, ancestral spirits, community godlings and personifications like Chi, Ifejioku, Amadioha and Ulasi Ogboro [8]), because it would be terrible for anyone to contemplate standing in front of the "majesty on high" face to face and worship. Even to the Christian the feeling in contemplation of the Sacred and his function is to lie prostrate before God's "throne and gaze and gaze upon Thee". The Ibo traditional religious worship has used Ala (earth goddess) and Ifejioku or Chi n'Agu as the throne from where to gaze and gaze upon God. But from wherever the christian and the traditional worshipper has gazed upon God, they both recognise the God that creates and sustains with bounty as well as with the possibilities of scarcity in the lean years or years of pestilence and war. To fail to recognise that both the christian and the traditional worshipper are engaged in a common act of trying to gaze upon God through their various acts of worship, no matter the throne from underneath which they both gaze, is again to deny that before the arrival of Christianity in this land God had not left himself without witnesses.

A GLOSSARY OF IBO WORDS USED IN THIS ESSAY NOT ALREADY EXPLAINED IN THE TEXT

Ala = earth hence earth goddess.
Amadioha = god of thunder.
Chi = individual's spirit counterpart.
dibia = a herbal medicine man who also may act as a diviner.
Eke, Orie, Afọ, Nkwọ = names of four days of one Ibo week.
Ifejioku = the god of yams (a tuber which is one of the peoples staple food).
Irọ Muọ = the "delighting" of gods.
Ogwugwu = name of a clan god.
Ọkpara = the oldest member of a family—nuclear, extended or clan.
Osu = a slave dedicated to a god or goddess.
Ọzọ (title) = a rank title acquired hrough expensive social and religious
    ceremonies
Ulasi Ogboro = name of a clan god.

---

8) See Glossary of Ibo words used at the end of the essay.

THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF NUMEN

This fascicule closes the twentieth volume of Numen.

For a young lady her twentieth birthday is a memorable occasion to be celebrated with flowers, presents and a festive dinner.

In the world of scholars people are not used to taking special notice of such a fact. And yet it is worth while to pay some attention to this anniversary. For in the present world of rapid changes and heavy competition many journals are short-lived. Numen has not only survived these dangers, but is more flourishing than ever before.

In this connexion it is part of my duty to render tribute to my late distinguished colleague and dear friend Prof. dr. R. Pettazzoni who founded this journal and acted as its editor-in-chief during the difficult first six years.

I should like to thank all those colleagues who have contributed to Numen such interesting and stimulating articles. I am thankful but not satisfied. There are national groups in the IAHR from which contributions all too seldom reach my editorial desk.

Let me not forget to express my gratitude for the help which Messers E. J. Brill, especially their director Mr F. C. Wieder Jr, are constantly giving me by taking good care of each fascicule.

Are there plans for the future? Certainly. The board of editors is hoping to be able to publish a special issue devoted to magic. I also hope to publish some articles that tackle the practical side of this study, i.e. the question of how one should teach the history of religions nowadays. Furthermore I should welcome it very much if scholars would start discussions on the burning problems of their study in Numen. Lastly, I am grateful for all suggestions coming from the subscribers.

THE EDITOR

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Books

CAUVIN, Jacques, Religions Neolithiques de Syro-Palestine, Documents, Publications du Centre de Recherches d'Ecologie et de Préhistoire, Saint-André-De-Cruzières, I, Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient. — Paris, Jean Maisonneuve Succ., 1972, 140 p.

FIGGE, H. H. Geisterkult, Besessenheit und Magie, in der Umbanda-Religion Brasiliens. — Freiburg/München, Verlag Karl Alber, 1973, 340 p.

HITTI, Philip, K. Capital Cities of Arab Islam. — Minneapolis, University of Minneapolis, 1973, 176 p.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY of the History of Religions, 1969, compiled by S. H. ALICH. — Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1973, 163 p.

MESLIN, Michel, Pour une science des religions. — Paris, Editions du seuil, 1973, 267 p.

RAMSARAN, J. A., English and Hindi Religious Poetry, An analogical Study. — Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1973, 199 p.

SABOURIN, Leopold, S.J., Priesthood, A comparative Study. — Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1973, 279 p.

TRACTATUS Tripartitus, Part I. De Supernis, codex Jung, F. XXVIr-F. LIIv (p. 51-104), ediderunt R. Kasser, M. Malinine, H.-Ch. Puech, G. Quispel, J. Zandee. — Bern, Francke Verlag, 1973, 390 p.

Periodicals

Euhemer, Przeglad Religioznawczy Polskie Towarzystwo Religioznawcze, 1/87, 2/88, 3/89, 1973.

Folklore, Volume 84, Spring and Summer 1973.

History of Religions, Volume 12, Number 4, May 1973, Volume 13, Number 1, August 1973.

Indian Philosophy and Culture, Institute of Oriental Philosophy, Vrindaban, U.P., India, Volume XVIII, No. 1, March 1973, Special Sri Caitanya Issue.

Kairos, Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft und Theologie, Neue Folge, XV Jahrgang, 1973, Heft 1/2.

Monumenta Nipponica, Volume XXVIII, Number 1, Spring 1973, Number 2, Summer 1973.

Theologie der Gegenwart, 16 Jg., Heft 1, 2, 3, 1973.

Theologische Zeitschrift, herausgegeben von der Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Basel, Jahrgang 29, Heft 5, September-Oktober 1973.